

UNITED STATES NAVY

SEABEE

FALL 2007

Pacific Partnership 2007

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Route

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(Cover) EOCA Ryan Cofer (left) and CE3 Derek Stevens (center), ACB 1, stabilize a two by four that a member of the Filipino 54th Engineering Brigade saws, as they work together to construct a new school for the children of Datu Andong, Philippines.

Photo by MC3 Paul D. Williams

(This spread) Seabees from ACB 1 unload a five-ton truck from Landing Craft Unit (LCU) 1617 in Sasamunga, Solomon Islands, in August, prior to supporting a civil-assistance project during Pacific Partnership 2007.

Photo by MCSS Matthew Jackson

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FINAL WORD

RADM Richard E. Cellon, CEC, USN, Commander, 1NCD, delivers his first message to the readers of *Seabee Magazine*.



George Markfelder
U.S. Navy photo

As you open the pages of this issue of *Seabee* Magazine, we'd like to introduce you to the newest member of our team – George Markfelder, who now heads *Seabee* as the leader of the editorial team.

George joined NAVFAC Public Affairs & Communications in June 2007 as assistant director of internal communication. He has been in the public affairs field for the past 32 years on active and reserve duty with the Navy, Army, Army National Guard, and most recently as a contract employee with the Joint Public Affairs Support Element (JPASE), Joint Forces Command, in Norfolk, Va., prior to joining NAVFAC.

He attended the Defense Information School at Fort Benjamin Harrison in 1975, and received a bachelor of arts in journalism from the University of Minnesota in 1983. His advanced degrees include a master's of science in international relations and a master's in public administration, both from Troy State, Ala., in 1991 and 1992, respectively.

Without question, George adds a wealth of military knowledge, established networking skills and a journalist's natural ability to find the story – wherever it may be. Like the Seabees, 'Can Do' is his moniker.

In this issue of *Seabee* Magazine, we feature Pacific Partnership 2007, a four-month humanitarian mission on the USS Peleliu (LHA 5), on which Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 and Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 embarked to assist with construction projects in Vietnam, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and the Marshall Islands. With the high demand for Seabee skills, the 25th NCR and NMCB 11 will be recommissioned by the time this issue is published. We will provide detailed coverage of the ceremonies and festivities that marked this historic event in the next issue of *Seabee*. Battalions are blanketing the globe – from Stateside to Australia, from Japan to Ukraine – completing building projects and goodwill missions, helping foster and sustain relationships around the world. And, in his first *Final Word*, RADM Richard Cellon shares Seabee pride with his fellow Builder Warriors.

Remember to send us Seabee news, as well as photos*, comments and candid feedback, so that we may continue to provide a well-rounded account of the Seabee story. Contact us via...

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Thank you for your continued interest in *Seabee*!

Sincerely,
Seabee Magazine Team

* Preferred format for photo resolution is 300dpi at 5x7 inches minimum.



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EDITORIAL

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SEABEES PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

USS PELELIU

Amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) makes a port visit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in May.

Photo by MC2 Lindsay Switzer

(Inset) SW3 Ben Hickok (right), NMCB 7, and a member of the Filipino 54th Engineering Brigade use a table saw together during the construction of a new school for the children of Datu Andong, Philippines, in June.

Photo by MC3 Paul D. Williams

Photo Illustration

MAIL CALL

To whom it may concern,

Hi! I am a very proud Mom to Petty Officer 3rd Class Samuel Ashby Southern, U.S. Navy and Seabee! My boyfriend got me a few copies of this great magazine at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. I have read them cover to cover, and it helps me feel and stay connected to my son who is stationed in California.

He is coming home for a visit in July, so I am very happy about that! As well as being a proud Navy Mother, I am a 'Navy Brat' as well. My Daddy, Chief Petty Officer Oscar M. Sessions, is a young age 90 and still living independently. He was in 14 Pacific battles in WWII. I am very, very proud of both of them!

God bless, and God bless the U.S. Navy!

Ms. Nancy M. Sessions
Oakton, VA

CORRECTION – In the Spring 07 issue of *Seabee Magazine*, *Seabees Build on 65 Years of 'Can Do' Spirit*, we inadvertently printed the incorrect date that the Seabees landed at Iwo Jima with the 5th Marine Division during World War II. That date was February 19, 1945.

CLARIFICATION – The Summer 07 issue of *Seabee Magazine* featured the story, *A Band of Sisters: Female Seabees Help Win the Hearts and Minds of Iraqi People*. The article mentioned that women from NMCB 28 were among the "first to participate in a regional program named Lioness." Several readers pointed out that the term 'Lioness' is quite a bit older than the regional program mentioned in the article. In fact, according to 1NCD, CS1 Regina Clark of NMCB 18 and five others in her convoy were killed while participating in a Lioness Program in Fallujah in June 2005. Thank you to our readers.

CNO: Humanitarian Missions Essential to Relationships, Global War on Terror

Source – Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.

In his third podcast to the fleet on June 18, 2007, CNO ADM Mike Mullen made it clear that humanitarian missions such as Pacific Partnership 2007 – on which two Seabee battalions are deployed to assist in construction projects throughout the Pacific – help foster and sustain relationships, while building the sort of trust that can help prevent the spread of global terror.

Pacific Partnership 2007 USS Peleliu's (LHA 5) four-month deployment began in May with a stop in Vietnam and continued with stops in the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and the Marshall Islands.

According to Mullen, the Navy learned valuable lessons after it contributed to disaster relief efforts in Indonesia after a tsunami devastated the region in December 2004. He worked closely with then-Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet ADM Gary Roughead to send the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) back to Indonesia last summer.

Mercy completed a five-month humanitarian and civic assistance deployment in August 2006, treating nearly 200,000 patients in the Philippines, Bangladesh, Indonesia and East Timor.

"So the whole goal here is... to foster and sustain relationships this year," noted Mullen. "It's a mission that continues to grow and one about which I am very excited. And like Sailors around the world, they [Seabees, etc.] are making such a difference in people's lives, and I think that's, in the long run, how we'll impact the global war on terror."

Note: At press time for Seabee Magazine, the Senate had confirmed ADM Michael G. Mullen as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mullen is expected to assume the top U.S. military post on October 1.



SW3 Ben Hickok (left), NMCB 7, stabilizes a two by four while a member of the Filipino 54th Engineering Brigade drills a hole which will be used to fit the base of a new elementary school for the children of Datu Andong, Philippines.

Photo by MC3 Paul D. Williams



Local children watch as a Filipino Seabee paints the overhang and two U. S. Navy Seabees work on the shutters of Datu C. Andong Elementary School in Mindanao, Philippines, during Pacific Partnership 2007.

Photo by MC3 Paul D. Williams

Seabees Build a Future – for Future Generations in the Philippines

By LTJG Francis Tay, ACB 1

In late spring, 53 Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 and Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 embarked on USS Peleliu (LHA 5) in San Diego for a four-month deployment to assist in humanitarian building projects throughout the Pacific. The two detachments from NMCB 7 and ACB 1 joined the Pacific Partnership team of host nation partners, regional partners, non-governmental organizations, military engineers, doctors and healthcare providers.

As part of the Pacific Partnership in the Philippines, the Seabees conducted simultaneous projects in nine separate locations from Satangkai Island to the Bicol region nearly 450 miles away. The engineering tasking included the construction of

a SEAHUT-style school; refurbishment of three other schools, two hospitals and one evacuation center; construction of multiple water reclaim systems; clearing of a flood water control canal; installation of a back-up generator at a hospital; and several other tasks.

For the detachment of nine Seabees in Mindanao, the mission was to build a new school, perform repairs on the existing school, and install a water reclaim system for the children of Datu C. Andong Elementary School. During the mission, Seabees worked alongside the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) 54th Engineering Brigade.

“Equally as important as the projects themselves is the opportunity to work

hand in hand with the AFP Seabees and Engineers,” said LT Greg Jennings, Seabee officer in charge for the Pacific Partnership. “This is truly a unique experience to set the foundation for a lasting friendship between the people of the U.S. and our brothers from the Philippines.”

The Seabees had no way to predict the impact of their work in the Philippines, but they were positive their hard work would have a lasting effect on the lives of the children and the community as a whole.

Steelworker 3rd Class Benjamin Hickok summed it up best when he said, “I’m proud to be a part of this mission because it will equip these children with the tools they need to become better educated, and ultimately to better their futures.”

Seabees Combat Forces of Nature

By MC2 Matthew Olay, USS Peleliu Public Affairs

Seabees Ease Typhoon Victims' Burden

Sailors from Naval Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7, Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 and Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 14 completed renovation of a large bathroom and shower facility at a Typhoon Evacuation Center in Guinobatan, Philippines, in mid-summer. The project is part of this summer's Pacific Partnership humanitarian mission.

Converted from a sports training facility, the Travesia Holding Center began taking in displaced citizens from the region immediately after Typhoon Reming left thousands homeless in late November, explained Virgie Oxima, a social worker with Guinobatan's Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The project included the installation of new toilets, urinals and sinks, as well as new electrical work, painting and the complete

rehabilitation of the building's roof, said Chief Utilitiesman (SW) Clinton Lyons, lead chief petty officer in charge of the project.

"Humanitarian work is another one of our skill sets... especially after natural disasters," Lyons said.

He added that such projects are very fulfilling because the Seabees get to see their work through to completion rather than having to pass it on to another battalion as is often the case with larger projects.

Prior to the Seabees' arrival, the nearly 1,400 evacuees at the center had been relying on hand pumps from underground wells to gather water for bathing, dish washing and other tasks.

Since the evacuation center project comes under the auspices of Pacific Partnership 2007, the Seabees are teaming with their counterparts from the Philippine Navy and Army, as well as with civilian engi-

neers from India.

"It's kind of nice to see that they get the same training as we do," Lyons said of the Filipino Seabees. "We can learn things from them, they can learn from us, and it's a good thing for the troops."

"I'm very glad that the Americans and the other contingents from different countries came here," said Ensign Enrico Payongayong, officer in charge of the project for the Philippine Navy. "We are very thankful for the support."

Now that the facility's renovation is complete, Seabees are building permanent housing for the evacuation center's residents.

"It makes you feel like you're doing something worthwhile. We're here making a difference," said Lyons. "You actually get to see the smiles on the faces and see what we've actually done. It's outstanding."

SCENES from PELELIU

Photos by MC3 Paul D. Williams



BU2 James Orr (left), NMCB 7, and EOCN Ryan Cofer, ACB 1, inventory construction material in mid-June to build a new classroom for local children in Cotabato, Philippines.



BU2 (SCW) Mike Carman (right), NMCB 7, instructs members of the Filipino 54th Engineering Brigade on how to use a nail gun prior to the construction of a new school in Datu Andong, Philippines.

Seabees Keep River Flowing in the Philippines

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 and Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 cleared thousands of tons of dirt and debris from a portion of the Tagas River in the city of Tabaco in late June.

The flood control effort – one of many projects on which the Navy is taking the lead during Pacific Partnership 2007 – comes as a response to typhoon-spawned landslides that clogged the river late last year.

Through Pacific Partnership, projects such as this one are being completed throughout the Bicol Region, as well as select locations in the southern Philippines including Jolo and Cotabato.

Using a bulldozer, a front-end loader, and three five-ton dump trucks, the team of seven Seabees removed between 250 – 300 cubic yards of dirt and debris from the site each day, according to Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW) George Petrofski, the project's supervisor.

"Thus far, I'm pretty happy," said Petrofski about his team's early progress. "Being in construction, you get to see the fruits of your labor directly. This river was completely backed up when we got here,

and now it's open."

The flood control project began to take shape when Petrofski and other members of a pre-deployment survey team came to the region and began assessing how the Navy could best help with the community's needs. During that assessment, local officials pointed out that flood control of the Tagas was a top priority.

"The U.S. [Navy] has technology that can help us," said Capt. Angel Gerapusco, team leader for the Tabaco City division of the Army Engineers of the Philippines. "We appreciate the presence of the U.S. government and our partnership with this type of job."

The Seabees' plan for cleaning up the river was simple.

"We'd come to the site each morning, set up and go straight to work," said Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Shawn Pope. "It's 'turn and burn' to get everything done – solid, non-stop work."

'Turning and burning' entails a repetitive, three-step process the Seabees use with each passing hour during the work day. First, the bulldozer scrapes along the river bed, which compacts the dirt into large piles.

The front-end loader then scoops up the material for deposit into the dump trucks and completes the process by hauling the cargo approximately three miles to a local dumpsite.

Though the hours are long and the routine is unwavering, Petrofski feels there is no shortage of morale among his team members. He credits this to the throngs of local onlookers, most of them children, who gathered at the job site since day one of the project.

"We walk around and everybody's always so happy to see [us]," said Petrofski. "They bend over backwards to make you feel welcome in the community. It really warms your heart."

Other members of the Seabee team have also noticed the outpouring of appreciation from the community.

"They love us over here, and the hospitality is just unbelievable," said Pope, who is participating in this kind of project for the first time with his fellow Seabees. "Everyone is so grateful, and it makes me feel good knowing I'm actually doing something to help another community."



A group of Seabees from NMCB 7 and ACB 1 tie reinforcement bars together that will be used to help concrete hold its form as they build a new school for the children of Jolo.



Children from Jolo, Philippines, watch as SW3 John Smith, ACB 1, constructs new desks for a local school.



World War II Seabee Regiment and Historic Battalion are Recommissioned

*Contributors: MC2 Erick S. Holmes, NMCB 11 Public Affairs,
MCSN Jeffrey Miltzer, 25th NCR Public Affairs,
Daryl C. Smith, Public Affairs Officer, 1NCD*

With the recommissioning of the 25th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 on September 14 at Construction Battalion Center (CBC), Gulfport, Miss., there can be no doubt of the increased demand for the Seabees' unique skills to support the Global War on Terror, while continuing humanitarian relief and reconstruction efforts around the world.

Full coverage of the recommissioning of the 25th NCR and NMCB 11 will be featured in the next issue of Seabee Magazine.

New Beginnings

Over the past few months, the 25th NCR has made great progress preparing to be recommissioned and take command of its subordinate units. These units include Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 7 and 133, Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1 and Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202.

In the operations arena, the 25th NCR has coordinated efforts to ensure the regiment is prepared to assume project oversight responsibility at assigned areas within the NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM Areas of Responsibility (AORs). As the first responder for a natural disaster in these AORs, the 25th NCR has worked closely with its sister regiment, the 22nd NCR, to ensure a smooth transition at the completion of the current hurricane season.

NMCB 11 will be incorporated into the 22nd NCR, along with NMCBs 1 and 74. Since March 2007, the new Seabees of NMCB 11 have been busy with pre-recommissioning preparations, including establishing the military organization and setting up administrative, operations, training and support functions. They have also been active in the surrounding community providing direct labor and support for numerous local and base projects and events, while steadily shifting gears into becoming a fully operational battalion.

World War II Roots

The 25th NCR was formed on April 1, 1944, and played a major role in the Normandy Invasion on D-Day during World War II. Seabees under the 25th Regiment were responsible for the rehabilitation of captured ports; manning and operating rhino ferries; manning phoenixes, pier heads and whale bridges while in tow across the English Channel; installing fuel facilities at Cherbourg and other captured ports; and installing and maintaining sunken pontoon causeways at Omaha and Utah beaches. After the assault, three battalions of the 25th Regiment opened the ports at Cherbourg and Le Havre.

The 11th Naval Construction Battalion was commissioned on July 27, 1942, and served on Tutuila, American Samoa, New Caledonia, Auckland, Banika, Los Negros, and Luzon, Philippines. It was disestablished on December 1, 1945.

On September 14, 1953, NMCB 11 was commissioned and sent to Cubi Point, Philippines, for the following two years. In 1955, the battalion was sent to Kodiak, Alaska, and Kwajalein. From 1961 to 1965 the battalion won the Efficiency Award four times.

In 1966, the battalion deployed to DaNang East in Vietnam to build Monkey Mountain Road, the Tourane Bridge and the main hospital. In 1967 at Dong Ha, less than 10 miles from the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the battalion became the northernmost Seabee battalion

in Vietnam. Subject to frequent enemy artillery attacks from across the DMZ, the battalion experienced one of the biggest ammunition explosions in history when the base ammunition supply point was hit on September 3, 1967.

In Vietnam, NMCB 11 built more than 2,000 structures in eight weeks during its Quang Tri deployment, completing one of the largest scoped programs ever tackled by the Seabees. The battalion was decommissioned at Port Hueneme, Calif., in December 1969.

Perhaps the most famous member of NMCB 11 is Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin Shields, Seabee Team 1104. On June 9, 1965, at the Battle of Dong Xoai, Shields died from wounds he received after carrying a critically wounded man to safety and destroying an enemy machine gun emplacement which saved the lives of many fellow servicemen who had come under attack from a Viet Cong regiment. For his heroic actions, he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. He was the first Sailor during the Vietnam War and only Seabee to be awarded the medal.

Seabee Pride... Old and New

NMCB 11's pride is evident in the present Seabees, as well as in the Seabees who served in the past. "I thought it was about time," explained Keith Nielson, retired Construction Electrician 1st Class and Vietnam-era NMCB 11 veteran. "She [in] my view should never have been the battalion to be decommissioned."

"I was very happy to see that our old battalion was being rejuvenated," said Samuel Hall, former Construction Mechanic 2nd Class. "Most people around me don't know about the Seabees other than what they have seen in me. With our [Mobile Construction Battalion] MCB-11 Association, I have been able to reunite with many of my long lost friends from the MCB-11 days," said Hall.

"I fully anticipate standing tall, straightening out every old bone and muscle in this 80-year-old body, and proudly rendering a salute as the new NMCB 11 marches by," stated retired CWO Jim Gilbert. "I'm not the least bit ashamed to say that there will probably be a tear or tears running down my cheeks. And I will silently be praying for the safety and success of the latest NMCB 11 in our great Navy."



Updated Seabee Regiment and Battalion Logos Revealed

(Above) Shown at the upper left is the new logo for the 25th NCR. It is a re-creation of the original WWII-era logo (upper right). In the original logo, the background is a shield of heraldry. The seahorses indicate the amphibious nature of the original 25th as it was instrumental in the crossing of the English Channel on D-Day. The four coronet balls on the crown represent the four subordinate units of the regiment. The three stars (center bottom) indicate the three battles during which the 25th NCR came under fire – Utah/Omaha Beaches, Le Havre and Cherbourg.

(Below) Shown at the lower right is the new logo for NMCB 11, an updated version of the WWII-era logo for the 11th Construction Battalion (lower left). First used in 1942, the original 'Bee bears a striking resemblance to the recommissioned Seabee but with some modern upgrades to his arsenal and toolbox.



GWOTUPDATE

Seabees Build to Support Navy's Riverine Squadron

By LT Jeffrey Moore, NMCB 28

Seabees from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2 and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28 wrapped up construction of shore-based and offshore facilities for Riverine Squadron One (RIVRON 1) at Hadithah Dam on Lake Qadisiyah in the Al Anbar Province, Iraq, in early August.

Hadithah Dam straddles the Euphrates River and stores water for irrigation use and hydroelectric power generation. Consequently, it is a strategic asset and has been used by Coalition Special Operations forces since the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. To this day it remains a vital part of the Iraqi infrastructure, and RIVRON 1 now patrols the waters of Lake Qadisiyah.

The construction of the facilities to support RIVRON 1's operations at Hadithah required the combined talents of both Seabee units. UCT 2 brought its expertise in underwater construction, while NMCB 28 furnished the concrete fabrication and shore-based 'vertical' construction expertise. Together, they constructed floating docks, boat ramps, offices and berthing.

Master Chief Constructionman Evans Adkins, NMCB 28, served as the senior Seabee on site and officer in charge of shore-based construction. According to Adkins, the experienced crews made tremendous progress in a short period of time despite high summer temperatures that remained above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, as well as stifling lakeside humidity.

"Ensuring construction materials flow[ed] to the site in a timely manner [was]

my biggest challenge," said Adkins. "The craftsmanship that I see exhibited by our Seabees is the most rewarding part. These guys aren't just throwing something together and walking away from it."

Builder 1st Class Marcel Mann, NMCB 28, noticed the crew of experienced tradesmen studied and then made subtle changes to the designs they were provided.

"Our changes improved constructability and quality of the finished product, and at the same time reduced construction time and cost," he said.

LCDR Michael Egan, executive officer of RIVRON 1, was impressed with the Seabees' work.

"What the Seabees are doing up here for us is huge," Egan said. "They are busting their tails up here, getting it done. I couldn't ask any more of the Seabees."

NMCB 28

UCT 2

EOC Wayne Walker (center) and EO1 Phillip Hardy (right), UCT 2, spread concrete to a pad section of a ramp to support boat launch and recovery from the Euphrates River in Iraq.
U.S. Navy photo



Seabee-built Combat Outpost Supports 13th MEU

By LTJG Christopher Wald, NMCB 28

Prior to June, a stretch of desert in the Al Anbar Province in Iraq was dotted with a few abandoned and battle-scarred buildings once used by the infamous Iraqi Republican Guard. Today, the scenery has changed and includes a fortified Combat Outpost (COP) now supporting as many as 600 Marines from the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

The recently completed COP is the result of the Second Marine Expeditionary Force's (II MEF's) need to establish a presence in an area where insurgents were operating with minimal interference from coalition force occupation. To accomplish this goal, II MEF needed a secure area from which to base its operations. The 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) was tasked to plan and construct a facility. The regiment then tasked Marine 8th Engineering Support Battalion (ESB) as the lead and Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 28 and 4 as support for construction of the COP.

Approximately 160 Marines and 30 Seabees combined their resources, skills and expertise to rapidly establish the camp consisting of 52 general purpose medium tents, five Southwest Asia (SWA) huts, 15 'four-hole burnout' head facilities, six shower tents, six high-capacity generators and 120 air conditioners. The entire COP was completed in about a week.

According to Maj. Bruce Erhardt, 8th ESB's engineer support company commander, more than 2.5 miles of 10-foot tall berms were built around the COP's perimeter to provide protection against sniper attacks. In addition, more than one mile of Hesco barriers (a modular, penetration-resistant barrier system filled with sand) was placed around the tents, along with SWA huts to protect from mortar and rocket blasts. Observation towers were also placed near entry control points and other strategic locations to monitor potential enemy activity.

"This is what we do well – build facilities and bases for forward-deployed forces and give them a secure location where they are positioned to carry out their mission," said CAPT Kate Gregory, commodore, 30th NCR.

"This was a total team effort from the top down, and I'm proud but not surprised that this team of Marine and Seabee professionals was able to complete this project so efficiently."

"The Seabee-Marine relationship works like a charm," said Senior Chief Builder Alonso Cadena, 30th NCR future projects chief. "On one hand we have the construction skills of NMCB 28 Seabees and on the other the aggressiveness of 8th ESB."

"When we combine the two, we get a contingency construction force that will essentially build anytime, anywhere and in very arduous conditions," Cadena said.

"This was a total team effort from the top down..."

— CAPT Kate Gregory, Commodore, 30th NCR

NMCB 4

NMCB 28

30th NCR

Establishing a new combat outpost (COP) for the Marines in Al Anbar, Iraq, Seabees from NMCB 28 and Marines from the 8th ESB use an up-armored front-end loader to fill one of the many modular Hesco barriers that will surround the COP.

Photo by LTJG Christopher Wald



Seabee Bridge Repair Saves Critical Iraq Infrastructure

By MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery, 30th NCR Public Affairs

When an explosion created by nearly 2,000 pounds of explosives on May 27 disabled the primary bridge providing access for vehicles passing between lakes Habbiniyah and Razazah in Western Iraq, Seabees from the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) were tasked to repair the heavily trafficked route.



The destruction of the western end of the bridge, referred to as the Atlantic City Bridge by coalition forces, would impact convoys that use the route to move supplies and personnel around the Al Anbar Province.

"When we got the call to repair Atlantic City Bridge, there was an immediate sense of urgency," said Master Chief Constructionman Michael Cassidy, leading chief petty officer for the 30th NCR's Operations Department. "Until we could get the bridge repaired, it would mean convoys would be taking more dangerous routes to get to their destinations. That knowledge provides plenty of motivation to get the job done as quickly and safely as possible."

The initial response was to send a team out to assess the damage and get an idea of whether or not a repair crew could work with what was left of the bridge structure.

"Luckily, we had been out to Atlantic City," said LT Charlie Kubic, 30th NCR structural civil engineer officer and project leader. "The first trip helped us considerably because it gave us pictures of the complete span before it was attacked. After doing the second assessment, we knew what needed to be done; it was just a matter of getting our resources together."

Those key resources included the 362nd Medium Reinforced Bridge Company of the U.S. Army's 321st Engineering Battalion out of Balad, Iraq, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, and Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC).

NAVFAC provides expeditionary warfare and contingency engineering, technical capabilities and expertise in support of the Warfighter in forward environments.

First, Kubic needed immediate stateside support. He called NAVFAC Contingency Engineer James Gale and got him out of bed. "Very few requests for engineering assistance come in the middle of the night for us," said Gale, who also explained that NAVFAC averages 4,000 man hours a year for the last five years on support to deployed units. "When we do get an urgent request, as we did with Atlantic, we respond in kind."

NAVFAC structural engineers received Seabee-provided electronic data and photos that enabled them to prepare a solution to



allow the repaired bridge to support mission-required Military Load Capacities.

"Getting good engineering data from the field is always a challenge, but LT Kubic did a great job making it real on the sharp end," said Gale. "After coordinating with fellow structural engineers here at NAVFAC, we decided a Mabey-Johnson bridging solution would be the answer."

A Mabey-Johnson bridge, named after the manufacturer, is a portable and very easy to assemble and launch bridge, according to Cassidy. But getting it in place is only part of the job. First, Seabees from the 30th NCR had to ensure all supplies were staged, personnel and equipment were moved, and the right tools were used.

Thirty-five Army engineers and security personnel arrived on



Seabees from the 30th NCR conduct a post-mission site assessment at the Atlantic City Bridge after the span was repaired using a Mabey-Johnson bridge in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq.

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Ryan Blairoh

site, along with two NMCB 4 Seabees, who ensured the bridge was placed precisely where the NAVFAC engineers determined.

“The missing section of bridge measured about 100 feet, so it was decided that the Mabey-Johnson bridge would be placed over the top of the existing bridge structure which would reinforce the span,” said Cassidy.

The Army engineers pieced together 40 meters of bridge and slowly pushed it across the chasm on a roller until it was long enough to reach the other side. The bridge was lifted, the roller was removed and the span was anchored into place.

According to Cassidy, the one-lane bridge took three days to build and is rated to handle most coalition force vehicles currently serving in Iraq.

CAPT Kate Gregory, commodore for the 30th NCR, explained that the mission reinforced the positive capabilities of the construction force serving under the Second Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) in Western Iraq.

“The quickness with which we were able to safely and effectively respond and repair this important infrastructure highlights our ability to act on a catastrophic event in theater and be able to recover in a short amount of time,” said Gregory. “Missions like this are why the Seabees are here in Iraq. We’re proud to be representing construction assets of nearly every branch of service, but more importantly we’re proud to be serving the Marines and Soldiers in this country at such a critical time.”



By MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery, 30th NCR Public Affairs

If Wedge Donovan's Seabee battalion had intelligence gathering specialists during the climactic battle at the end of 1944's film "The Fighting Seabees," perhaps his combat construction team would have been ready for the unexpected second enemy column that eventually forced him to heroically ram his bulldozer into a petroleum storage tank. While he destroyed the enemy, it cost John Wayne's tough, no-nonsense character his life.

The idea may have come too late to save the fictional World War II-era Donovan, but a new program that incorporates intelligence specialists into Seabee units deploying to Iraq may save some very real present-day members of the Naval Construction Force (NCF).

THE PLAN For the first time since the creation of the Seabees in 1942, naval intelligence specialists have been assigned directly to a Seabee unit, the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq.

"While the 30th NCR is the first unit to receive specialized intelligence assets, more than 40 intelligence billets have been funded by the Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) for the NCF," said

LT Scott Norberg, 1st Naval Construction Division's (1NCD) intelligence officer. Formerly a reserve intelligence officer, Norberg was recalled to active duty at 1NCD to assist in the formation of the new intelligence program. "Over the next two years, every battalion, regiment and the division will have organic intelligence personnel assigned," he added.

SEABEES DEPLOY FIRST

Intelligence

SUPERHIGHWAY

Prior to sending the current organic intelligence team, the Seabees utilized other members to act as intelligence gatherers. The mentality was that during peacetime, there was a need to conduct continuous training and have an officer whose sole responsibility would be to coordinate and track it. When deployed to a hostile environment, the mindset was that training was complete, and the training officer would become the intelligence officer, according to CDR Stephen Cook, chief staff officer, 30th NCR.

"In reality, Seabees in a war zone need to both train and gather intelligence," said Cook, an 18-year Civil Engineer Corps officer, who is a private contractor in the civilian sector. "Having someone manage an intelligence unit in a war zone as a second job is like owning a small business and having the receptionist manage your books. By adding trained intelligence specialists to

the Seabee units, it's the same as taking the books away from that receptionist and hiring a certified public accountant."

Volunteer reservists comprise more than half the Seabees currently serving in the Al Anbar Province. During the search for intelligence assets, the Seabees turned to reserve Individual Augmentees for volunteers. Norberg explained that the force will need to utilize reserve augmentation for the near future to ensure the correct level of support for deployed Seabees.

"We should start filling active compo-

(Opposite) 30th NCR Intelligence Officer LT Steven Husby (center), with help from his intelligence staff (left to right), IS2 Matthew Shreiner, ISC Duane Bruechert and IS1 Louis Kesthley deliver an intelligence brief to BUCS Rick Cousins (far right) at Camp Fallujah, Iraq, in June, prior to conducting a site assessment for a future off-base project.

Photo by MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery

30th NCR

nent billets by December,” said Norberg, who began working on the program last year with the support of CDR Michael Murray, NECC’s assistant chief of staff for intelligence. He explained that intelligence billets were being added to several units under NECC. “It will be a quick ramp up.”

THE RIGHT STUFF The intelligence team first to deploy with the Seabees, led by LT Steven Husby, was augmented to the 30th NCR and needed to adjust to life as part of the NCF culture.

“From new uniforms to speaking a new language, my team had to immerse itself into the Seabee world to be able to appropriately communicate the message and accomplish the mission. The senior leadership was amazing. They really took my team under their wing and helped make the transition easier.”

The team is comprised of a hodgepodge of unique and interesting civilian professions, including chemistry, law, management, video game testing and insurance among others.

“It’s critical building the right type of team for this job” said Chief Intelligence

ed to serve as the intelligence liaison to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4. “The regiment-to-battalion relationship is command and control,” said Ramirez, who includes weather and road conditions as part of his overall daily intelligence report.

“The regiment intelligence staff conducts broad trend analysis studies that take into account the entire NCF operating area here in Iraq. Those reports are relayed to my office and the other battalion intelligence departments so we can help develop a good picture for our areas of operation.”

BUILDING CONFIDENCE As the Intelligence Department head, Husby sees his team as being in a unique position to mold this process for future mobilizations.

“Having a full-time intelligence staff is the right thing for the Seabees in a wartime scenario,” said Husby, who has served in the Navy for 15 years. “[We] need people with specialized training; people who are trained to see the big picture and gather data in a way that will determine the greatest threat to personnel and operations.”

“It’s our job to sift through all available data near where our engineers may be

Making people feel safer in dangerous situations is one benefit to having a specialized intelligence gathering staff – the other benefit is tearing down misconceptions and building correct situational awareness.

“Our intelligence team was able to show them long-term trends that changed the truth of their perceptions. These truths now allow them to make more accurate and informed decisions, which ultimately ensure a better chance of completing a mission successfully and safely,” said Cook, who currently serves as second in command of the 30th NCR.

RISK VS. REWARD Being the first of anything brings a certain amount of responsibility. It means setting the tone for the future, building the foundation and principles for replacements and, perhaps most of all, simply being successful. Being wrong or not providing enough information could be the difference between life and death for someone outside the wire.

The promise of keeping people safe and contributing to the success of the war is shared by more than one member of the 30th NCR intelligence team.

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE CREATION OF THE SEABEES IN 1942, NAVAL INTELLIGENCE SPECIALISTS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED DIRECTLY TO A SEABEE UNIT – THE 30TH NCR IN THE AL ANBAR PROVINCE OF IRAQ.

Specialist Duane Bruechert, leading chief petty officer for 30th NCR’s Intelligence Department. “Together, with all of our individual experiences, we find different ways to utilize our training and expertise to help save lives. That idea alone gives us a great sense of responsibility and drive to be successful.”

Once the team was assembled in Iraq, the proverbial ‘intelligence superhighway’ needed to extend off-ramps to the battalions in the war-torn region. Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Carlos Ramirez was select-

working or traveling,” said Bruechert. “We can develop the threat potential for future construction sites, show areas of repeated attacks on our convoys or develop future attack locations that operations managers should take into consideration.”

Once the intelligence gathering team can paint a picture of an area, members brief convoy commanders and site assessment personnel on what they need to look for to stay safe while working off base or what is commonly referred to as “outside the wire.”

“The intelligence community gives me the opportunity to utilize my analytical skills in a way that I hoped would someday contribute to the war on terror,” said Kesthely, who like many Americans felt a strong need to join after the World Trade Center buildings were attacked. “This deployment has allowed for that to happen. It’s rewarding to know that the information I give convoys, battalions and the regiment helps keep our Seabees safer.”



A pontoon bridge section sits stranded and suspended by two ferry-crossing cables on the Euphrates River in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq in May. NMCB 28, in coordination with the U.S. Army's 7th Engineer Dive Team, removed the bridge section from the river since it posed a threat to critical infrastructure located downstream.

U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Adrian Biggerstaff

Seabees Play Key Role in Euphrates Bridge Recovery Operation

By LT Jeffrey Moore, NMCB 28

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28, based at Al Asad in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq, completed joint operations with Marines and Soldiers on June 9, to remove a portion of a pontoon bridge from the Euphrates River after it became lodged downstream.

"This was a very challenging recovery operation that required a significant amount of coordination between multiple units in the battle space for security, equipment, line-haul and final recovery of the bridge section," said LCDR Daryll Long, NMCB 28's operations officer. "It was truly a joint operation and our operations staff did a phenomenal job planning the execution of this mission."

Pontoon bridges are commonly used as an inexpensive and quick way to span rivers. The roadway decking is supported by floating pontoon sections that are anchored to each other and to the shore.

This bridge section's weight (an estimated 80 to 90 tons), its location and the swift seven-knot river current compounded the degree of difficulty. The only reason it had not swept downstream and possibly

damaged critical infrastructure was that it was entangled in the cables of an old ferry crossing.

With the high threat level, the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), headquartered at Camp Fallujah, recognized the challenging aspect of the waterborne operations. It requested support from the U.S. Army's 7th Engineer Dive Team out of Kuwait, which sent a squad led by 1st Lt. Adrian Biggerstaff. NMCB 28 was tasked to help the team plan and execute the mission, and provide convoy security between Al Asad and the job site.

Recovery of the bridge would entail pulling the bridge section to shore. But, before the operation could be carried out there would be significant site preparation work along the banks of the Euphrates to prepare pulling ramps to facilitate dragging the bridge section to shore. The Seabees calculated the pulling power required to reel in the rogue bridge section and realized their construction assets might not be sufficient.

Needing help, NMCB 28 coordinated with the Marines' 1st Combat Engineering Battalion (CEB) for bulldozer support. The Marines quickly offered two massive 60-ton Caterpillar D9 bulldozers (affectionately named 'War Pig' and 'Maximus') for the job.

The Seabees and the Army's 7th Engineer Dive Team stayed on site at the river during operations for both security and logistical purposes, and the Marines' 1st Battalion, 3rd Regiment from Alpha and Charlie companies patrolled both sides of the Euphrates. The Seabee convoy security element, led by Chief Construction Mechanic Stephen Lucia, provided a significant portion of security along the perimeter of the site.

Conditions on site were challenging, and the summer temperatures did not make the job any easier for the team to work in protective tactical gear.

While NMCB 28 and 1st CEB commenced shore preparations, the team traveled to the bridge section in Zodiac rubber boats, attached towing bridles and a 'deadman' anchor line. The anchor line was used as a safety precaution in the event the bridge section tried to float downstream. The team then pulled the heavy wire rope towing cable across the swift moving river from the inflatable Zodiacs.

"The numerous challenges and obstacles faced on site required extreme flexibility and creativity throughout the duration of the operation," said Biggerstaff. "The equipment organic to our team was not designed for the demanding requirements of this operation, but through the sweat and per-

NMCB 4

NMCB 28

30th NCR

'Rockhounds' Move Mountains to Support Naval Construction Force in Iraq

By LTJG Christopher Wald, NMCB 28

Contingency construction often results in the need for massive amounts of aggregate and fill material to be moved on site rapidly. The 'Rockhounds,' as they are commonly referred to, comprise a unique team of specialized Seabees born from this need.

The Rockhound crew serving in Iraq this past spring and summer is a team of 17 Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 4 and 28, as well as the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR).

According to Chief Equipment Operator Gary Basham, officer in charge of the Rockhound crew, these Seabees represent a diverse background of specialties, including equipment operators, construction mechanics, builders, utilitiesmen and construction electricians. The youngest crewmember is 19 years old and the oldest is 45. The crew contains both active-duty and mobilized reserve Seabees.

"The common thread is that they are all motivated and love what they're doing," said Basham. "Our mission is to deliver fill material and aggregate to Forward Operating Bases (FOBs), Observation Posts (OPs), Combat Outposts (COPs) and new Iraqi Police stations. The team and equipment have the ability to move 220 cubic meters of material on one convoy. There is no other unit or convoy element capable of doing this," he added.

In the first two months of the deployment, the team delivered nearly 12,000 cubic meters of material on a total of 96 missions covering more than 3,000 miles. "We have covered almost all of the Al Anbar Province, from Fallujah to the border of Syria," said Basham. "This is the ride of a lifetime; I wouldn't trade it for anything."

One of the biggest challenges the Rockhounds face is keeping their seven dumptrucks maintained and ready for the road. According to Equipment Operator 1st Class Stephen Snow, assistant officer in

charge, the team deals with a lot of flat tires and various other mechanical issues as a result of the harsh conditions.

"It's tough for us to get the trucks to keep up with the people," said Snow. With the exception of major issues, Rockhounds perform all maintenance and repairs themselves. He said being a Rockhound involves a lot of long hours and hard work, but the team enjoys it and they have the opportunity to meet a lot of people.

"We love our jobs, you couldn't run us off with a stick," said Snow. "It is nice to be able to look back and see the result of our work is having a direct effect on improving conditions for the Marines."

Equipment Operator 1st Class Anthony Soares is currently on his second tour as a Rockhound. He completed a tour with NMCB 18 and then volunteered for a second tour with NMCB 28. In the eight months Soares has been on the team, he has completed more than 400 missions.

"It's a lot of hard work and sometimes we end up sleeping in our trucks or in our trailers, but at the end of the day it makes you feel good to know you have made a difference for those living on the FOBs, OPs and COPs," said Soares. "It is very satisfying work."



Rockhound illustration by CE3 Mark Decker, NMCB 28. See Profile on page 25.

NMCB 28

severance of all hands, we were able to get the job done."

The divers destroyed and removed the ferry cable that originally entangled the bridge section and prevented it from moving farther downstream. One of the massive bulldozers began pulling the bridge section with the towing cable. The bridge slowly floated downstream, picking up speed with the swift current, until the towing line became taut and stopped. With the use of both War Pig and Maximus, the bridge section was pulled closer to shore.

Everything was proceeding according to plan until the pontoons supporting the bridge began to sink, tearing away from the bridge superstructure as they ran aground in the more shallow waters closer to shore.

The team members improvised and fastened the towing cable to reinforce the connections between the pontoons and superstructure, relying on the pontoon sections for buoyancy in order to land the bridge section. Then they cut parts of the steel holding the bridge section together, allowing them to pull the bridge section in three pieces as opposed to one large piece.

The remaining portions of the bridge were beached, and the team headed back to base – tired, soaked with sweat and covered in dirt.

Another mission accomplished.

Seabees Work with Naval Security to Further a Free Iraq

By MC2 Jessica A. McIver, NMCB 133

Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 contributed to an international mission in the Persian Gulf, off the coast of Iraq and Iran, on two oil platforms in May.

Al Basara Oil Terminal (ABOT) and Khawr Al Amaya Oil Terminal (KAAOT), less than a 30-minute boat ride apart, was the site where members of Naval Coastal Warfare's Mobile Security Detachment (MSD) 24 needed safety, showers and morale. The 'Bees of NMCB 133 were there to lend a hand.

On ABOT, Seabees constructed a shower facility for coalition forces and visitors to the platform. They had already installed toilets, performed electrical work around the platform and built several storage containers

for their hosts.

At KAAOT, the mission was different; the 50-year-old platform was in need of extensive restoration due to serious battle damage from old struggles between Iraq and Iran.

The Seabees at KAAOT had completed three bridges that link platforms within the terminal, constructed multiple storage units and aided in fortifying force protection measures, all in less than six weeks. They also furnished the medical treatment facility.

Since their mission was ahead of schedule, Seabees performed general maintenance aimed at bettering the quality of life for MSD 24, including building bunks for the detachment on KAAOT.

"It's amazing what morale can do," said Builder Chief Keith Lefebvre, officer in charge (OIC) for detachment U.S. Naval

Forces Central Command (NAVCENT). "Security comes first, but quality of life should definitely come second. It gets the job done more effectively."

Ensign Ivan Afanador, OIC of MSD's KAAOT detachment, is appreciative of the contribution the Seabees made to his unit.

"Right off the bat, they were all about teamwork," said Afanador. "They integrated well, and came together with us as a team."

While teamwork is important, safety is always the first priority among the Seabees, and they spread that sentiment throughout ABOT.

"They helped a great deal out here," said LTJG Danny Sericor, OIC of Det 24 at ABOT. "Aside from the shower facility, they helped out with electricity and conversion from 220 [volts], which is very important because fires are very dangerous out here."



The platforms are diverse in their off-shore community. The population includes Australian, British and Iraqi forces, as well as American civilian and military.

Although diversity makes the mission unique, another primary difference is that the Seabees are used to operating on the ground, rather than on water.

Construction Electrician 2nd Class Michael Perez-Dejesus, crewmember at ABOT, was glad to have had the opportunity to work on such a distinctive project.

"It's something different, and a good experience," said Perez-Dejesus. "Years from now, I will be able to say 'I was there.'"

(Left) While Iraqi contractors look on, BU3 Christopher May, NMCB 133, uses a circular saw to cut plywood to support a back wall in the shower facility Seabees constructed on Al Basara Oil Terminal (ABOT) in the Persian Gulf in May.

Photo by MC2 Jessica A. McIver

Odenthal Takes Over as Commanding Officer of NMCB 133

CDR Allan M. Stratman (left), turns over command of NMCB 133 to CDR Paul J. Odenthal, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, on May 24. As is traditional in the Seabees, the outgoing commanding officer (CO) passes the battalion flag to the incoming CO to signify the passing of the torch. NMCB 133 was deployed to Kuwait at the time of the change of command.

Photo by MC2 Jessica McIver



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NAVY

RESERVE



Seabees Leave Their Mark on Al Anbar Province

By MC2 (AW/SW) Ronald Gutridge, NMCB 4 Public Affairs

BERTHING FACILITIES

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4's Delta Company Team Three constructed two Modular Protective Billeting (MPB) berthing facilities in the Taway Province of Ramadi, Iraq, in mid-June.

The MPBs provide housing for civilian contractors who train the Iraqi Police Force. These facilities consist of a berthing area and a top pre-detonation roof. The roof is designed to add protection to the berthing area from indirect fire. The living area of each MPB is equipped with full electrical and air conditioning, and can accommodate up to six residents.

"I was very impressed with how the troops of Team Three were always on guard while doing their mission, as well as interacting with the local population without losing

their focus," said Steelworker 1st Class (SCW) Eugene Burston, Team Three mission commander.

During the mission, local Iraqi children frequently visited the worksite. The team played with the children, took photos and shared candy. Many Seabees at the job site said the work and the company of the local children raised their spirits.

MEDICAL FACILITY

Four members from NMCB 4's Delta Company constructed and installed two access doors at the Charlie Medical Facility on Camp Ramadi on June 22.

The doors were created so patients could be moved from one room to another inside the medical facility without going outside and being exposed to the elements.

"This project is particularly important to me," said Construction Electrician 3rd Class Andrew Miles. "Because of my work, I know that the wounded will not be exposed to unsanitary conditions."

Delta Company worked through the night hours cutting through concrete walls using a gas-powered rescue saw and welding the steel frames using the portable welding trailer. A short turn-around time and maintaining a clean work environment was essential so that medical facility operations would be disrupted as little as possible.

"We had to design exhaust ports leading out of the building for the power saw exhaust and the fumes from the welding," said Steelworker Constructionman Siamac Moghaddam. "We also had to clean after every cut we made."



Even though the Seabees faced numerous challenges, including working around the arrival and treatment of wounded, they completed the project ahead of schedule.

"The Seabees of Delta Company showed dedication to this project," said Army SSgt. Jason Yurek, Charlie Medical's night shift officer-in-charge. "They had to delay their work for more than two hours because of a patient evacuation and still completed the task for that night."

CRANE OPERATIONS

A five-member crane operations crew attached to NMCB 4 conducted a special mission in downtown Ramadi on June 26.

While Marines provided security, the crew used a 40-ton link belt crane to hoist and position four observation structures on

top of a newly constructed Combat Outpost (COP). After the crew members positioned the structures, they strategically placed 3,000 pounds of sandbags around each structure to increase overall protection.

"Our training and practice operating heavy equipment in a small area proved to be very effective during this evolution," said Equipment Operator 1st Class Jose Amador, crane operations supervisor. "The crew did an exceptionally outstanding job of completing the mission without getting distracted by the many Iraqi civilians gathering to see a crane operation."

The COP provides added protection for the Army and Marine security forces, and a sense of security and a safer environment for the local residents.

NMCB 4

(Above, left to right)
EO3 Stephen Dixson, NMCB 4, digs a telephone line trench using a Bobcat trencher at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, in May.

EO3 (SCW) Jason Castillo (right) directs EO3 Mathew Roy, NMCB 4, during forklift operations at Camp Ramadi.

EO3 Mathew Roy (left) guides EO1 (SCW) Joie McCarty, NMCB 4, during operations in Ramadi, Iraq.

Photos by MC2 (AW/SW) Ronald Gutridge



RADM Richard Cellon, Commander, 1NCD (right), receives a brief from BU1 Katarina Stran, 30th NCR, in the Combat Operations Center at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Cellon visited the Naval Construction Force in the Middle East from August 3-6.

Cellon Makes First Visit to Seabees in Iraq as Commander of First Naval Construction Division

*By MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery,
30th NCR Public Affairs*

Rear Admiral Richard E. Cellon, Commander, First Naval Construction Division (1NCD), visited the Al Anbar Province, August 3-6, to see first hand how his Seabees are directly impacting the war in Iraq.

Cellon's visit was part of a Middle East sweep to assess the current status of his forces and discuss the way ahead as the Seabees prepare to implement the Fleet Response Training Program this year.

"Right now is the best time to be a Seabee," said Cellon during an all hands call at the Camp Fallujah chapel with Seabees from the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28. "The contribution to the nation by Seabees has never been greater, and I could not be more proud of the job you are doing."

His comments resonated with the upcoming growth of the Seabee community which is standing up a new naval construction regiment and battalion in Gulfport, Miss., on September 14. The expansion indicates that Seabees are playing a critical role supporting Warfighters in current world-wide military operations. Cellon was accompanied by Seabee Force Master Chief James Fairbanks during the visit.

☆ CHANGE OF COMMAND ☆

Cellon Assumes Command of First Naval Construction Division

By Daryl Smith, Public Affairs Officer, 1NCD

Rear Admiral Richard Cellon relieved RADM Robert L. Phillips as Commander, First Naval Construction Division (1NCD) on June 29 during a ceremony at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Norfolk, Va.

RADM Phillips commanded the 1NCD since November 2004, and retired with 32 years of service. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal during the ceremony. RADM Cellon thanked Phillips for "his spectacular leadership of the NCF and for positioning the force to best serve our nation now and well into the future."

Upon assuming command, Cellon said, "'Can Do' is more than just a slogan for our Seabees. It's a way of life, and it's positively infectious. Seabees are team players and winners, and you really want to be part of their team. And, that's why it's such a privilege for me today to be joining that team.

"I'm also very pleased to be part of the NECC [Navy Expeditionary Combat Command]," Cellon continued. "I recognize that along with that tremendous privilege comes significant responsibility and accountability. I welcome that and pledge to give my very best every single day to ensure the 16,000 men and women of the Naval Construction Force are successful."

The guest speaker for the event was RADM Donald K. Bullard, Commander, NECC, who offered high praise for the work the Seabees are doing every day.

"They [Seabees] have become one of the most highly sought-after fighting forces



RADM Richard E. Cellon (left) and RADM Robert L. Phillips shake hands at the conclusion of the 1NCD Change of Command Ceremony on June 29 at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Norfolk, Va.

U.S. Navy photo by Daryl Smith

⊕ **GLOBAL WAR on TERROR**

RADM Richard Cellon, Commander, 1NCD, holds an all hands call for Seabees from the 30th NCR and NMCB 28 at the Camp Fallujah Chapel during his recent tour to the Middle East.

Photos by MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery



and support forces in our joint force. Not only do they fight right alongside special forces and our Marines and our Army today, but they're able to take on different jobs that no other combat engineer does," Bullard commented. "They are envied throughout our joint service, and they are called upon on a daily basis to train other countries so they may too make a contribution like the Seabees do."

Cellon previously served as commander of Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), Atlantic, in Norfolk, Va. His other command tours included commander, NAVFAC, Pacific Division in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii from 2002 to 2003; commander, NAVFAC, Southern Division in Charleston, S.C. from 2000 to 2002; Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 from 1996 to 1998; and Naval Support Facility Thurmont, Md. (Camp David) from 1994 to 1996.

A native of Gainesville, Fla., Cellon is a 1978 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. He holds masters degrees from the University of Florida (civil engineering), and the Naval War College (national security and strategic studies).

Command of 22nd NCR Changes Hands

By MCC (SCW) Jeffrey Pierce, 22nd NCR Public Affairs

Captain Robert A. McLean III relieved CAPT Eric S. Odderstol as Commander, 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), during a change of command ceremony on June 20 aboard Construction Battalion Center (CBC) Gulfport, Miss.

The ceremony caps a successful tour for Odderstol, who departs to become chief of staff at Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) in Norfolk, Va. Shortly after assuming command of 22nd NCR in May 2005, Odderstol was designated as commander of 1st Naval Construction Division (1NCD) (Forward) to lead the Seabees' response to Hurricane Katrina as a part of Joint Task Force – Katrina. During the largest peacetime deployment of Seabees in the United States, more than 3,000 Seabees from 10 different commands deployed into the southernmost regions of Louisiana and Mississippi.

Naval Construction Force units under Odderstol's leadership supported four of the five geographic combatant commands worldwide. During his tenure, Odderstol oversaw operations and exercises in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, the Horn of Africa, the Black Sea region, South America and the Caribbean.

McLean comes to 22nd NCR from Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Pacific where he initially served as operations officer, and then as vice commander.



Commander 22nd NCR, CAPT Eric S. Odderstol (left) transfers the regimental flag to CAPT Robert A. McLean at a change of command ceremony held in June at NCBC Gulfport, Miss.

Photo by MC3 John Hulle



Purple Heart

The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action.

NMCB 28 Seabee Awarded Purple Heart in Iraq

By BU1 James Gammon, NMCB 28 Public Affairs

Construction Electrician 2nd Class Jason Harrison, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28, was awarded the Purple Heart Medal by RADM Richard Cellon, Commander, 1st Naval Construction Division (1NCD), on August 4, during a ceremony at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq.

Harrison is a mobilized reservist Seabee serving in the Al Anbar Province in support of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF). On March 11, Harrison was serving as a gunner in the lead vehicle of an NMCB 28 Convoy Security Element (CSE) team when his vehicle was attacked by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). He was knocked unconscious by the explosion, suffered a serious concussion and spent two days on limited duty. Since then, Harrison completed more than 150 missions while still serving as the lead gunner.

Harrison enlisted in the U.S. Army in December 1999, and was honorably discharged in October 2006. Later that month, he enlisted in the Navy Reserve through the CB-VET Construction Electrician Program and affiliated with NMCB 28 in Baton Rouge, La. In his civilian career, Harrison works as an offshore surveyor.



RADM Richard Cellon (left), Commander, 1NCD, awards CE2 Jason Harrison, NMCB 28, the Purple Heart for an injury sustained in March when an IED detonated near his vehicle while serving as a gunner during a convoy security mission in western Iraq.

Photo by CDR Christa Ford

Seabees Receive Bronze Stars

Bierce Recognized for Supporting Naval Special Warfare

Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter awards CWO Mark Bierce, Logistics and Support Unit 2's Combat Service Support Detachment (CSSD) officer in charge, the Bronze Star citation and medal on June 5 at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Va. During his deployment to Iraq, Bierce supported Naval Special Warfare (NSW) operations in some of the most dangerous areas in-country, while managing more than \$2.5 million in contracts.

Photo by MC1 (SW/AW) Katt Whittenberger



Hullsiek Honored for Service During Operation Iraqi Freedom

CAPT Steve Wirsching (center), NAVFAC Southwest commanding officer, presents the Bronze Star citation and medal to PO1 Joshua Hullsiek on August 6 for exceptionally meritorious service during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Hullsiek is currently stationed with NAVFAC Southwest Public Works Department (PWD) at Naval Base Coronado (NBC). CPO Ronald Davis, NAVFAC Southwest senior enlisted advisor and lead chief petty officer for PWD NBC, stands at attention during the presentation.

U.S. Navy photo by Lee H. Saunders

SEABEE "SCETCH" ARTIST FINDS INSPIRATION IN IRAQ

By EO2 Lori Roberts, NMCB 28 Public Affairs



CE3 Mark Decker, NMCB 28

Photo by
MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery



Looking more like a college student than a soldier, he bends his head in concentration over a comic-like logo. He is producing a drawing for the 'Rockhounds,' a convoy team of earth and rock movers that has become essential to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28 projects around Iraq. He signs his work "Scetch," an intentional misspelling of "Sketch" that you would expect from an artist. His fellow Seabees may not know much about him, but they do know that NMCB 28's Construction Electrician 3rd Class Mark Decker is involved when they see artwork depicting their 'Bee or battalion.

Decker, 26, has been creating artwork for as long as he can remember. He began producing representations of the NMCB 28 emblem and other works while still in A-school in Wichita Falls, Texas. There, he painted a Seabee statue outside the quarterdeck and created a memorial anchor, both of which are still on display at Sheppard Air Force Base. Since then, Decker has been both officially and unofficially decorating the world in which Seabees live – making drill and deployment a more aesthetic experience for everyone around him.

While in Port Hueneme, Calif., during mobilization, Decker began designing T-shirts and coins for the battalion. Many designs originated on restaurant napkins during dinner with his fellow Seabees – preserving the ideas spurned by conversations of Seabee history and the impending deployment.

"He's amazing," said Construction Electrician 1st Class Brian Landreneau, one of the first witnesses to Decker's napkin art. "Ask him to draw something and he can spontaneously come up with a design in minutes."

When the battalion arrived in Kuwait at the beginning of deployment, Decker created a mural on the smoke-pit wall as a memorial to NMCB 28. He continued his artistic journey after arriving at Camp Fallujah, creating murals in the command building and in other buildings around Camp Knott, the Seabee compound named in memory of fallen Seabee Steelworker 3rd Class Eric L. Knott. Later, Chief Hospital Corpsman Victor Valdez-Perez requested a mural from Decker on the wall of the Basic Aid Station as a complement to the corpsman memorial.

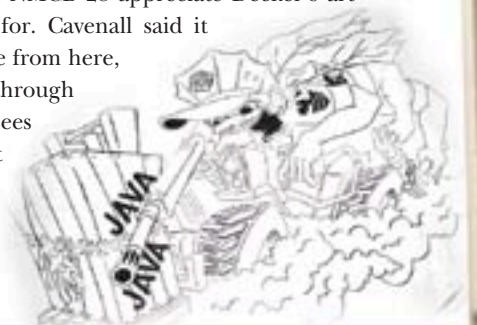
"Decker created a work of art that will acknowledge all who witness the price that has been paid by those Seabees lost from the battalions who worked and lived in our compound before us" said LT Ivan Cavenall, officer in charge of NMCB 28 Delta Company in Fallujah.

Decker, who thinks of himself as a graffiti artist, was working on his tattoo apprenticeship in Houston, Texas, when he was activated with NMCB 28.

"I started drawing when I was two – at least, that's what my mom says," explained Decker. "I keep drawing because I like expressing myself visually, and because in this environment it provides a lot of stress relief for me, and hopefully for the people who see my art.

"When I do work for the 'Bees, it is not only representing me, but Seabees as a whole," he continues. "I want people to look at my work and see the hard-driven construction battalion that we are – with a 'Can Do' attitude no matter what obstacle is in our way. I also want people to see into the heart of the Seabees because they are such good people."

The Seabees of NMCB 28 appreciate Decker's art and what it stands for. Cavenall said it best: "When we leave from here, everyone who walks through the quarterdeck or sees any of Decker's art will realize the legacy of those who were here before us and who are here now."





Seabee Divers Train^{the}

SSgt. Ivars Kuznecovs, a Latvian diver, enters the water during Sea Breeze '07. The exercise involved multiple countries, including nearly 750 U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Army personnel.

Photo by EA2 (SCW) Travis B. Musgrove

During most of July, Seabee divers and support personnel from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1 deployed to Odessa, Ukraine, to participate in the multinational training exercise *Sea Breeze '07* as an element of the Maritime Component Commander of Combined Task Force 167.

In its 10th year, *Sea Breeze* involved 13 different countries, including nearly 750 U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Army personnel. The annual EUCOM Partnership for Peace exercise focuses on NATO interoperability of maritime, air and ground task forces, in addition to peace support operations for the Black Sea nations, such as Ukraine and Turkey. UCT 1's specific mission was to train divers from the Ukraine Mobile Diving Unit, Latvia Explosive Ordnance

Disposal and Macedonia Combat Diving Unit in surface-supplied diving operations and underwater cutting/welding techniques.

Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW/DV) James Igoe, UCT 1 Air Detachment Charlie, served as the exercise planner and deployed to the Western Naval Base in Ukraine with 20 tons of gear, including the MK-III Lightweight Diving System for surface-supplied diving, underwater cutting and welding equipment, hydraulic tools, side scan sonar and the remote operated vehicle (ROV). He ensured that all 47 divers were trained and understood the rigorous safety procedures required to ensure a safe and productive training exercise.

The language barrier was eliminated thanks to the assistance of a translator, Sgt. Igor Zolotushkin, from the Defense Threat

World

By LCDR Daniel M. Stoddard, UCT 1

Reduction Agency (DTRA). He interpreted all diving subjects and dive-side terminology which greatly increased the learning process, allowing for more in-water training time for the participants.

When asked about his participation, Sgt. Zolotushkin replied, "Great exercise. *Sea Breeze 2007* was a great experience for me as an interpreter and as an NCO. I've gotten a lot of great practice and useful experience by working with the U.S. and nationals' dive teams."

To increase training value and utilize all diving skills and equipment, several realistic scenarios were employed, such as retrieval of a downed helicopter, location and recovery of jettisoned ordnance, and repair of pier-side piping system damaged by exploding ordnance.

Once the foreign divers completed the classroom phase, they performed a dive with a qualified UCT technician to ensure they understood the procedures and familiarized themselves with the equipment, such as the MK-21 diving helmet. During the pier-side operational phase at the Western Naval Base, the dives started at 10 feet for gear familiarization, progressing to underwater cutting and welding. While some divers were working pier-side in the water, other divers were using side scan sonar, used to identify objects on the sea floor. This training proved even more valuable when divers located a previously unknown sunken boat inside the harbor. The ROV, with two cameras onboard, viewed ships below the waterline.

Following that evolution, the bathymetric system identified the depths and slopes of the sea floor to verify its contours and profile. Another test of interoperability involved communications. The UCT technicians maintained the mission-critical SATCOM, HF and VHF nets during the entire exercise to transmit report-

ing requirements to CTF 167 headquarters at the Western Naval Base, the Maritime Component Commander embarked aboard USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), and other U.S. and foreign units.

In addition to the diving scenarios, a communications-related scenario was launched to conduct a contingency damage assessment of a pier facility and transmit data for further engineering analysis. UCT 1 successfully accomplished this reach back capability to NAVFAC Atlantic, Contingency Operations Engineer Division in Norfolk, Va., to analyze the data and provide a notional design for the repair.

Lt. Cmdr. Jurijs Timofejevs, commanding officer of the Latvia Explosive Ordnance Disposal Diving Team, explained his goals. "This is the 5th DIVEX we have been involved with, three in Baltic, one in Georgia, and this one in Ukraine. Our goal is to train to dive in hot weather environments and to train Ukrainian divers with rebreathers. We also participated in surface-supplied dive training, and underwater cutting and welding with the UCT divers."

Capt. Fillip Cvetkoski, commanding officer of the Macedonian Special Forces SCUBA diving team, was very happy with the training. "Five stars for the *Sea Breeze* exercise! This is more than a great thing for all of us from the Macedonian diving team. We, the Macedonian 'Wolves,' are very much excited to be here and work with all of the divers from the United States, Ukraine and Latvia."

As *Sea Breeze* progressed, so did the depth and complexity. While embarked aboard the Ukraine-based ship UPN Kremenets, and working at a depth of 80 feet, the previous tasks were performed in addition to light salvage operations using underwater lifting gear. As a training sce-

nario for the downed helicopter, the divers moved more than 1,000 pounds of concrete and steel along the bottom with lift bags, using underwater hydraulic tools to drill, grind and hammer.

The diving experience at sea was the pinnacle of the coordination efforts for all four nations involved and cemented the bonds as diving professionals.

"*Sea Breeze '07* has been a unique opportunity for a variety of Sailors, Airmen and Marines from around the globe to train and operate together," stated CDR Daniel Daglio, fleet diving liaison officer from NAVEUR for CTF 167. "As it turned out, a diver is a diver, regardless of nationality."

LCDR Daniel Stoddard, commanding officer of UCT 1, was grateful for everyone's hard work and dedication.

"*Sea Breeze '07* was a resounding success thanks to the unparalleled cooperation and participation by the Ukrainian, Latvian and Macedonian diving units. I would also

UCT 1

Seabees in Ukraine

like to commend Air Det Charlie for the detailed planning leading up to and incredible professionalism during the exercise...a truly fantastic effort by everyone," Stoddard said.

"In the spirit of the Partnership for Peace program, I know the positive impacts of the enhanced interoperability will be felt for many years to come," he continued. "As the only NCF unit to participate in *Sea Breeze*, my Seabees were not only a shining example of the great things the UCTs do daily, but also fully demonstrated the 'Can Do' spirit resident in every Seabee. I am extremely proud of them."



Seabees Frocked by Australian Army Colonel

Australian Army Lt. Col. Stuart Yeaman (right) presents EO1 (SCW) Karl Tischer (left) with a Certificate of Promotion and congratulates him on his advancement. (Background, left to right) EO2 (SCW) Brandon S. Miller, EO3 Angel Garcia Jr., and EO3 Pedro H.R. Brito stand at attention and wait to receive their certificates.

Photo by Air Force MSgt. Rickie D. Bickle

NMCB 4 Goes 'Down Under'

By NMCB 4 Public Affairs

Thirty-one members of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, along with U.S. Army and Marine Corps personnel, arrived at Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Darwin in June to take part in a Joint Rapid Airfield Construction (JRAC) project.

By completing this project, the United States and Australian Defense Forces demonstrated they can construct an airfield for strategic airlift within 30 days in any operational theater from virgin soil, supporting the largest transport aircraft, the C-17 Globemaster.

Developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the technology provides both nations with the ability to construct an expeditionary airfield without the need for surveyors and time-consuming site layout, traditionally required for such projects.

"This will be the first time since 1942 that Australian and U.S. forces have joined together to construct an airfield in Australia," said Lt. Col. Stuart Yeman, JRAC Combined Joint Task Force commander.

On April 26, 1942, the 1st Battalion of the 43rd General Services Regiment, USACE, began work 10.5 miles south of Katherine, Australia, at an airstrip named Carson's Field. The airfield was 1,300 meters (14,216 yards) long and designed to handle propeller-driven B-24 Liberator bombers. The airfield was later finished by the RAAF airfield construction squadrons. That field, now named Tindal, is the lynchpin in the defense of Australia's Northern Territory.

The U.S. Army's 43rd General Services Regiment and the 808th Aviation Engineering Battalion, in conjunction with RAAF units, constructed seven more airstrips in the Northern Territory, taking between 28 and 53 days for each strip.

Seabees in Australia



First Aircraft Lands on Nackeroo Airstrip

By Air Force MSgt. Rickie D. Bickle, NMCB 4

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 personnel, along with members of the Joint Rapid Airfield Construction (JRAC) Task Force, watched in anticipation as an Australian C-130 Hercules approached the Nackaroo airstrip at Bradshaw Field Training Area (BFTA) in Australia's Northern Territory in late June.

The C-130, tail number A97-006, was the first aircraft to land on the newly completed airstrip on the morning of June 23. The U.S. Air Force certification crew from the 320th Special Tactics Squadron, based out of Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa, Japan,

gave its official blessing for C-130 ops, and the Royal Australian Air Force responded with quite a show for the construction team.

Members from NMCB 4, U.S. Army, U.S. Marines, Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force units combined efforts to construct the airstrip in a record 16 days. In the past, airstrips capable of supporting the C-130 aircraft normally took 30+ days to construct. In addition, the airstrip is capable of supporting not only the C-130, but also one of the largest jet transports, the C-17 Globemaster III.

The airfield is proudly named after the famous North Australian Observation Unit (NAUO), nicknamed the 'Nackeroos' that patrolled the Northern Territory (NT)

in World War II. Based in Katherine, NT (about 250 kilometers east of Timber Creek) and led by a former anthropologist familiar with the area, Maj. William Stanner, the Nackeroos gained a reputation for their toughness and dedication.

Initially struggling in this harsh territory, the Nackeroos formed strong alliances and gained respect for the Aboriginal inhabitants that helped them navigate the area and survive. The cooperation and mutual respect continues today as evidenced by the cooperation that is Bradshaw Field Training Area. The next big event is the arrival of two C-17 aircraft – one from the United States and one from Australia.

NMCB 74 Detail Guam Did What Many Believed Couldn't Be Done

By LTJG Ben Waite, NMCB 74

NMCB 74 In its six-month deployment, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74's Detail Guam was forced to deal with countless obstacles, including two large financially constrained projects, the redeployment of crews to the desert and a near typhoon. Through it all these Seabees maintained their determination and drive.

The 'Fearless Seabees' of Detail Guam prepared for deployment with one thing in mind – finish the laundry facility that would support thousands of Sailors stationed aboard Naval Base Guam. This project was started at the base by the Seabees nearly four years ago. At that time, tasking in Guam was based on the availability of a full battalion with project completion estimated at one year. As the demand for Seabees in the desert increased, the Guam deployment

site went from a full battalion to a single detail, making finishing the laundry facility an almost insurmountable task.

One of the greatest challenges the detail faced was that of a complex 128-cubic-yard overhead butterfly roof placement.

"I've worked on larger projects, but never one of this magnitude," said Construction Electrician 1st Class (SWC) John Davis, upon the successful completion of the roof. "The crews did an exceptional job coordinating the 24-hour operations. They accomplished the most work they could in the shortest amount of time."

In order to power the building, more than three miles of conductor was pulled with two 250-amp disconnects. The builders were busy as well with 4,000 square feet of vinyl and ceramic tile, 4,000 square feet of drywall, 16 interior and exterior doors, and 21 custom windows.

"I did my best to drive the night crew" explained Builder 1st Class Michael Bonner, night crew project

supervisor." It's hard to be on a different schedule than everyone else, but my crew stepped up to complete the mission."

Utilitiesman 3rd Class Jose Legaspi had a different outlook on the project. "This was one of the rare times in my Navy career to work as a utilitiesman," Legaspi said. "Normally, I am placing concrete or providing security in the desert."

In a time when Seabees are conducting contingency construction and providing security for convoys, unique projects that require every skill in the battalion are hard to come by. The laundry facility provided just that.

"My crew can look back on this project, know they accomplished exceptional work and did something everyone said couldn't be done," said Builder 1st Class (SCW) Scott Abbott, project supervisor. "They finished it."

Seabees from NMCB 74 Detail Guam work quickly in a coordinated effort to complete a complex 128-cubic yard overhead butterfly roof placement for a laundry facility to support thousands of Sailors stationed aboard Naval Base Guam. (Inset) Front side view of completed laundry facility in Guam.

Photos by LTJG Ben Waite



Seabees in Guatemala



CBMU 202

Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter (center) tests the sturdiness of a swing set repaired by CBMU 202 Seabees assigned to USNS Comfort (T-AH 20). Winter paid an official visit to Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, during the Comfort's humanitarian mission.

Photo by MCC Shawn P. Eklund

Guatemalan Patients: "God bless you for helping us"

By MC3 Tyler Jones,
Fleet Public Affairs Center, Atlantic

The Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) pulled anchor and left the Bay of Amatique, Guatemala, on July 2 after completing five days of training and humanitarian assistance operations in several Guatemalan cities.

Throughout the five days in Guatemala, military and civilian teams from Comfort, including Seabees from Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202, provided medical care, including primary adult and pediatric services, preventive medicine education and vaccina-

tions, to the people of a nation in which 56 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

"The response that we received from the local population was incredible," said CAPT Bob Kapiro, mission commander. "When our teams arrived at Puerto Barrios the first day, we were getting off the buses and the people were cheering."

Missions were conducted at four work-sites around the eastern coast of Guatemala. Teams of Navy, Coast Guard, Army, Air Force, U.S. Public Health Service and Canadian Forces medical personnel partnered with volunteers from non-governmental organizations, such as Project Hope, to care for more than 20,000 patients.

The turnout at the medical center in Livingston was so great that

the mission was extended to a fourth day. "We probably could have stayed another two or three days, to be honest," Kapiro said.

Medical services were also provided to Guatemala's more rural population in the town of Morales, where Comfort teams worked in heat indices in excess of 110 degrees Fahrenheit to provide the population with quality, no-cost health care.

One citizen, identified only as 'Helen,' hand-delivered a letter to the crew thanking them for their efforts.

"Our country doesn't have very good medical care," said Helen in her letter. "These two public hospitals that you saw are the only ones in this area. People have [traveled] from five hours away to come to these hospitals...God bless you for helping us and taking the time to come here."





(Left) At the Puerto Barrios Children's Hospital in Guatemala, patients wait to be seen by military doctors and medical personnel assigned to Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20). CBMU 202, assigned to Comfort's humanitarian mission, renovated the children's hospital, providing safer and more modern environment for patients and their families.

Photo by MC2 Steven King

(Right) ENS Leonard Neal (center), CBMU 202, describes the progress his unit has made in the operating room at Puerto Barrios Children's Hospital in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, to Second Lt. Oscar Gomez (left) and Lt. j.g. John Santos, Guatemalan naval public affairs officers from the Naval Command of the Caribbean Naval Base on June 29.

Photo by MC2 Elizabeth Allen



Seabees Put Final Touches On Children's Hospital

By MC2 Elizabeth R. Allen and
MC2 Joan E. Kretschmer,
USNS Comfort Public Affairs

Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202 and Sailors attached to the Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) worked together from June 27 through July 1 to renovate Puerto Barrios Children's Hospital in Guatemala.

Comfort is on a four-month humanitarian assistance deployment to Latin America and the Caribbean providing medical treatment to patients in a dozen countries. Comfort is owned by the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command and operated and navigated by 68 civil service mariners employed by MSC. During the deployment, Comfort is under the operational control of U.S. Naval

Forces Southern Command, and tactical control of Destroyer Squadron 24.

Upon completion of the project in Puerto Barrios, the children's hospital now has a corrugated steel roof over the emergency and operating rooms, ceiling fans and fluorescent lighting in the operating room, repaired plumbing in the bathrooms, functional doors and frames, repainted walls, and renovated playground equipment.

Everyone has come together to improve the children's hospital for its employees and its many patients.

"The reception here by the Guatemalan people and the military personnel has been absolutely fabulous – they have been helping us in every avenue we have come across," said Ensign Leonard Neal, CBMU 202 officer in charge.

Utilitiesman 2nd Class Charlie King, CBMU 202, worked on several projects

around the hospital.

"The main objective of being here is to provide a better environment for the people of the Latin American countries," King said. "We're not trying to change the whole world – we're just trying to take it one day at a time."

Carlos Suniha, director of Puerto Barrios Children's Hospital, said "The experience has been very positive."

He also thanked the American people for helping the children and their families, and for making Guatemala a better place to be.

"I want to say thank you to the American people," said Doris Rovas, a nurse at the children's hospital. "And I thank God that you all have come to help the Guatemalan people, and for all the great construction you have done in the hospital so that we're able to tend to the children better."

Seabees Sent for Humanitarian Effort in Quake-Stricken Niigata

By Brian Naranjo,
Naval Air Facility Atsugi Public Affairs

Fifteen Seabees from Naval Air Facility Atsugi's Public Works Department participated in a volunteer humanitarian mission to Kashiwazaki City, located in Niigata Prefecture, about 160 miles northwest of Tokyo, which was devastated by a severe earthquake on July 16. The mission was in response to the request made by U.S. Ambassador to Japan J. Thomas Schieffer to assist in any way possible.

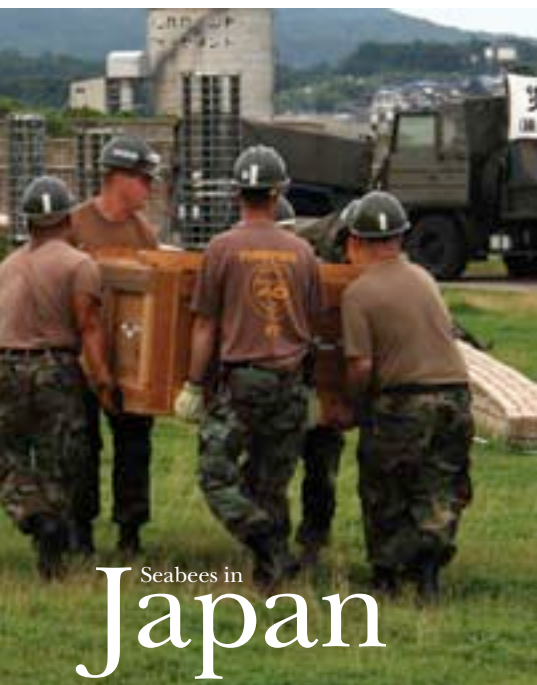
Detachment Officer-In-Charge LTJG Andrew Hayes and U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) Air Force Maj. Rodney Harris met with local and Japan Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) officials to receive briefings and coordinate activities. The earthquake, which measured 6.8 (out of a possible 7) on the Japanese shindo scale, killed 10 local citizens, injured more than 1,200, and left 9,000

of the city's residents to gather in nearly 100 sweltering makeshift refuge areas, quietly struggling to cope with the heat. Most of the Sailors mobilized for the trip to the city on July 19 and returned home a few days later after having demonstrated their "Can Do" attitude and goodwill by installing 79 air conditioning units in ill-equipped shelter areas throughout the city.

"Seabees have a long tradition of providing assistance after natural disasters. I am honored we were allowed to help our Japanese friends and allies," Hayes said. "It's been a great experience working with the JGSDF. I think we both learned a lot from each other."

(Far left) Seabees from Naval Air Facility Atsugi's Public Works Department move a general-purpose tent at Minato Machi Kaihin Kohen in Kashiwazaki, Japan, to assist those affected by a 6.8-magnitude earthquake sustained by Niigata Prefecture on July 16.

U.S. Navy photo by Pat Halton



Seabees in
Japan

Seabees in Ethiopia

Seabees in Ethiopia Attract High-Level Attention

By BUCA Nick Emanuele,
NMCB 133, CJTF-HOA

Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133, Detachment Horn of Africa (HOA), in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, received a great deal of attention earlier this year – not only due to education-related construction projects, but through the trust and friendship they are building throughout the community.

Last spring, the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Honorable Donald Yamamoto, paid a visit to NMCB 133, along with the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA). More recently, Brig. Gen. Sanford Holman, deputy commander, Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), visited the Seabees of Addis Ababa at Camp Lemonier, accompanied by coalition officers from Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, France, Egypt, Great Britain and Romania.

The Seabees in Addis Ababa had been

tasked by the CJTF-HOA to construct three concrete masonry unit block structures for the Abiot Emerja Primary School. One structure will house the school's library, the second structure will become an administrative building, and the third will be a latrine facility.

During his visit, Yamamoto commented to the ENA, "The U.S. supports community-centered development activities throughout Ethiopia, and Seabee projects are a great way to strengthen the relationship between Ethiopia and the United States."

Builder 2nd Class (SCW) Scott Anderson, Addis Ababa crew leader, remarked, "The ambassador was surprised to see how much the project was impacting the surrounding communities. He also said he has never seen a project get so much attention as this one."

In addition to building new facilities for the school,

the Seabees spent some time playing soccer with local children.

NMCB 133

"Interaction with these kids is a great experience. I've never done anything like this before," said Construction Electrician Construction Apprentice Royce McMillion, who is on his first deployment and noted it would probably be his most memorable. "I know we are making a great impact on the children's lives, and that's something I will always carry with me."

The Seabees are expected to complete the Addis Ababa project in late September 2007. Future Seabee projects in the Addis Ababa area include additional school construction in other local neighborhoods.

NMCB 133 Seabees take time out of their construction schedule at the Abiot Emerja Primary School in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to pose with Brig. Gen. Sanford Holman (center), CJTF-HOA deputy commander, and coalition officers.

Photo by BUCA Nick Emanuele



Battalion Updates: SEABEES AROUND THE WORLD



Seabees in
Belize



(Above) UT2 Craig Gardener, CBMU 202, hammers a board for a sidewalk at Belize Rural High School, Double Head Cabbage, in early summer.

Photo by MC2 Joan E. Kretschmer

(Left) SW2 Herbert Collins, CBMU 202, helps children paint school walls at Belize's Monsignor Romero Roman Catholic School in the Valley of Peace in June.

Photo by MC2 Joshua Karsten

CBMU 202

Seabee Provides Healthcare to Local Island Population

NMCB 4

By MCC (SCW/SW/AW) Steve Bansbach, NMCB 4 Public Affairs

Moving the earth, constructing buildings and reinventing villages are everyday occurrences for Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4. However, on the island of Palau, one Seabee and a local apprentice are providing some unique services – basic healthcare and medical assistance.

One of the main objectives of the Civic Action Team (CAT)

Palau

Seabees in

Palau is to provide Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) support to the local island community since the closest hospital is about an hour away. Since April, Hospital

Corpsman 1st Class (SCW) Jason Schwieterman and his apprentice have seen more than 1,400 patients.

“My apprentice has been a tremendous help. Without her, I would be here until midnight, just based on the sheer volume of patients,” Schwieterman said. “Plus, it helps that she is a Palauan national, so she can speak to the locals and help put them at ease.

“Some of the locals are very shy because it is their first time talking to an American; others just fear doctors in general,” he continued. She helps them talk about what is bothering them so I can diagnose the problem.”

Although Schwieterman has mostly given immunizations and provided care for colds and cuts, he has also treated some serious lacerations and coral injuries.

Schwieterman feels he provides a ‘personal touch,’ and helps build strong ties between the military and the local community.

“While the Seabees are here to provide an infrastructure, I get to see the people on an individual basis,” Schwieterman said. “I talk one-on-one with them, and they see that we are very sincere in the care we provide.”



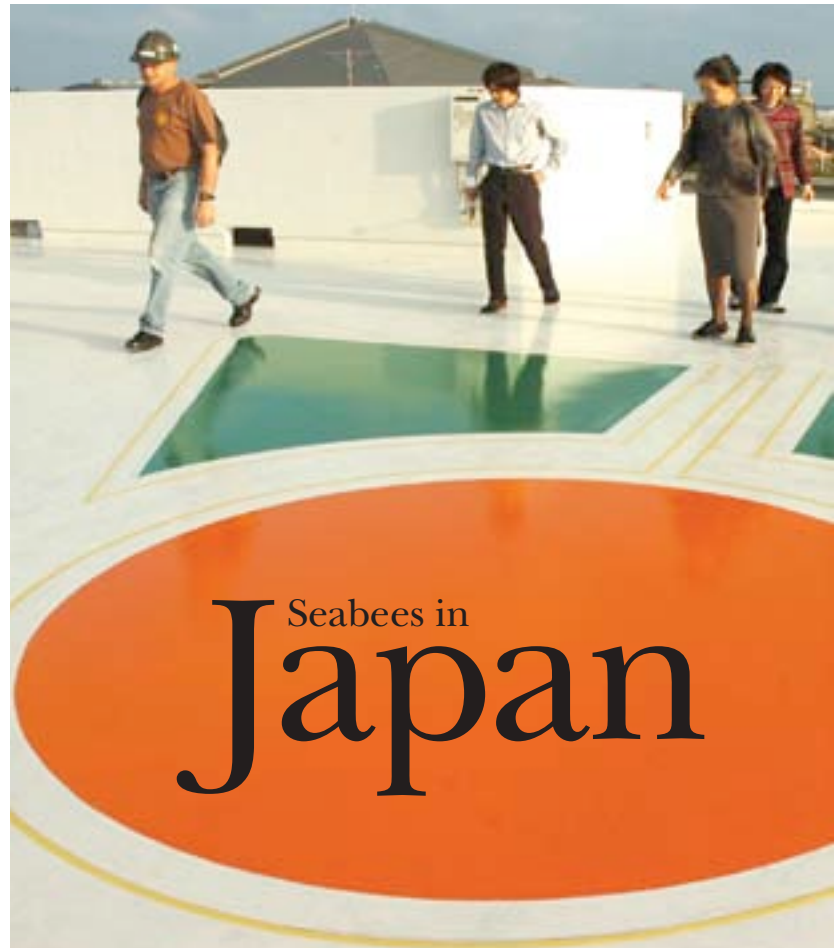
HM1 (SCW) Jason Schwieterman, NMCB 4, checks the blood pressure of a Palau Island national. Since arriving on the island, Schwieterman has seen and treated more than 1,400 local patients as part of the Civic Action Team (CAT) Palau.

U.S. Navy photo

Seabees Identify School for Disabled Children >

(Right) Staff members of the Agena School for disabled children in Okinawa, Japan, review the logo volunteer Seabees from NMCB 3 painted on the roof of the school. Seabees from NMCB 3's first class petty officer association volunteered for the work so the school could be easily identified from the air in case of emergencies.

Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yepez



Change of Command

CDR Tony M. Edmonds (right) relieves CDR Scott K. Higgins (left) as commanding officer of NMCB 3 during the change of command ceremony at Camp Shields, Okinawa, Japan. CAPT Hans Probst (ret) (center) served as guest speaker for the ceremony which took place in May during the battalion's deployment to the Far East.

Photo by MC2 Dustin Coveny



Five Master Chiefs Take Oath of Reenlistment

NMCB 3

By MC1 Carmichael Yepez,
NMCB 3 Public Affairs

Five master chiefs from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3 reenlisted during a joint ceremony at Camp Shields, Okinawa, on June 1.

NMCB 3's Executive Officer, LCDR Kirk Lagerquist, reenlisting officer for all five master chiefs, introduced them by saying that collectively they have 126 years of naval service.

"You do the math," said Lagerquist as the crowd chuckled. "They've done 44 deployments, 13 overseas tours and they are all expert rifle and pistol qualified."

"It is truly an honor and a privilege to be the reenlisting officer today for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," Lagerquist continued. "I appreciate their continued, dedicated service to the Seabees."

After Lagerquist gave a short description of each master chief's naval career, they were briefly discharged from the Navy. Then in unison, all five master chiefs raised their right hand to repeat the oath of enlistment.



CDR Anthony Edmonds (far left), NMCB 3 commanding officer, and LCDR Kirk Lagerquist (far right), executive officer, flank the battalion's five master chiefs who reenlisted during a joint ceremony at Camp Shields, Okinawa, on June 1. NMCB 3 master chiefs (from left to right) included Command Master Chief Ray Dickey, Constructionman Master Chief (SCW) Martin Yingling, Utilitiesman Master Chief (SCW) Michael Sigler, Equipmentman Master Chief (SCW/SW) Robert Graves and Constructionman Master Chief (SCW) David Rich.

Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yepez

"It is a tradition with NMCB 3 for master chiefs to reenlist at the same time," said Constructionman Master Chief (SCW) David Rich, one of the five master chiefs reenlisting in the Navy. "But this time, we are making history for NMCB 3 because I don't think something like this has been done before."

Seabees Deliver at 'The Rock'

By BU3 Jamie Curcio, NMCB 21

Navy Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 21, based at the Naval Air Engineering Station in Lakehurst, N.J., completed a 500-man-day renovation project at the Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training site on San Clemente Island, also known as 'The Rock,' in Coronado, Calif. The project, completed on schedule, included comprehensive interior and exterior repairs to the BUD/S training site's barracks, obstacle course and other areas.

The barracks' interior was completely gutted and refurbished, including new plumbing and electrical systems, shower facility, drywall replacement and finish work. The deteriorated sheeting on the building's exterior was replaced, and new doors and windows were installed. Detachments were sent for two-week deployments to complete tasks such as sheetrock, spackle, plumb-

ing, concrete and painting. During these deployments, Seabees enhanced their rate skills, while improving the facilities at this secluded island training compound.

On the obstacle course, Seabees rehabilitated a three-story timber tower and "Slide for Life," and replaced deteriorated elements of the rope climbing obstacle. In addition to the original tasking, Seabees completed an air conditioning installation and built a detached garage for SEAL vehicles.

Chief Steelworker Joseph Murphy, chief petty officer in charge on site, directly attributed the project's success to his crew members. "They were very professional," Murphy

said. "This carried over to a good working relationship with the customer, who benefited from meaningful facility improvements while the Seabees made full use of an excellent training opportunity."

The Navy has owned and trained at San Clemente Island since 1934. The location and physical characteristics of the island make a superb environment for land, sea and air training for the Navy, Marines and other military services. In addition to a BUD/S training site, San Clemente Island hosts ranges for live fire and other military training, and is also used for testing and evaluation.

NMCB 21

Seabees Stateside

NMCB 24

NMCB 24 'Bridges' Gap for Army at Fort Knox

In early July, NMCB 24's Detachment 0724 refurbished the Yano Bridge near Yano tank range at Fort Knox, Ky. During the project, Seabees removed and replaced deteriorated bridge deck planks, allowing larger Army vehicles to safely travel over the river to the tank range. The project has increased the Army's land use on the range by 45 percent, and was completed for the cost of material only.

U.S. Navy photo





Desert Heat

(Left) CE2 Peter Godi, NMCB 1, prepares for convoy operations at Camp Shelby, Miss., during Operation Desert Heat in June. The joint field exercise with NMCB 23 assessed the battalions' contingency construction capabilities.

Photo by MC2 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart

(Right) CM2 William Rounds, NMCB 1, digs a fighting position as part of the battalion's training to 'build and fight,' during Operation Desert Heat at Camp Shelby, Miss.

Photo by MC2 Demetrius Kennon

CARAT Exercise Series Benefits Elementary School

*By MC1 Dave Gordon,
Task Force 73 Public Affairs*

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 worked with their counterparts from the Philippine Naval Construction Brigade to help refurbish the Kaumpurnah Elementary School in Isabela, Philippines, as part of an Engineering Civic Action Project (ENCAP).

The \$19,000 project, which began May 31 and used Seabee talents from both units, included a rebuilt school clinic, roofing replacement and repair on five buildings, a new concrete courtyard and a complete overhaul of the school's restroom structure. More than 1,100 children ranging from grades one through six attend the school. The project was dedicated June 8 during the Philippines phase of the 2007 Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise series.

U.S. and Philippine Seabees cleared ground, removed concrete, and tore out old and decayed wood from classroom buildings in preparation for construction. Sailors from both navies shared techniques and compared construction styles throughout the site.

"We share our ideas," said Lt. j.g. Jayson Masuela, the Philippine Seabees' officer in charge. "We also share our appreciation. These Seabees are very professional, allowing us to finish this project fast."

"We're learning from each other," said Equipment Operator 3rd Class Nick Bailey, NMCB 7.

At the ENCAP's start, excessive heat and a torrential rain slowed progress. By day four, however, construction was back on track with poured concrete for the clinic flooring and half of the courtyard. Debris was removed from the restroom and replaced with new ceiling joists, plumbing and fresh masonry.

Students and teachers stopped by to watch the teamwork first hand.

Rachel Delantte, a fifth grade teacher, was impressed with the Seabees' accomplishments.

"They are workaholics," Delantte said. "They are very friendly and helpful with what they did for my classroom [to replace the water-damaged ceiling]."

Delantte's classroom, along with several others, had water-soaked ceilings torn down and replaced.

Builder 1st Class (SCW) Eric Elliot summed up many of the Seabees' feelings when he said, "This is work that makes you feel confident that you're doing something for people who truly appreciate it."

CARAT is a regularly scheduled annual series of bilateral military exercises involving the U.S. and five Southeast Asian nations designed to enhance interoperability of the respective sea services.

COLD STEEL '07

NMCB 14 Provides Construction Support to 22nd NCR FEX

*By MC2 Christine Hannon,
Public Affairs Center, Atlantic*

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 14 recently deployed more than 300 reservists to Camp Shelby, Miss., for Field Exercise (FEX) Operation *Cold Steel '07* in February and March. During this FEX, NMCB 14 provided direct construction support to the 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) in a simulated tactical environment, a change from previous years.

In the past, NMCB 14 arrived at a pre-designated landing zone, established 360-degree perimeter security, and set up the base camp where the battalion remained throughout the entire evolution. As the camp was aggraded, the battalion defended its position, personnel and assets. The defense was static in nature since NMCB 14 operated in the rear area, based on the scenario.

This year's FEX focused on tactical convoy movement, convoy security and tactical logistics. It was based on setting up an LSA [Logistics Staging Area], followed by tactically displacing the unit from the LSA to the Forward Operating Base [FOB]. The whole time the battalion is operating in a simulated hostile environment under a high threat level. Seabees have to counter potential breeches in the LSA perimeter and defend convoy elements while they are pushing out to the FOB.

"In comparison to previous FEXs, this year's had a much stronger emphasis on command, control, communications, and convoy planning and security," explained CDR Gary Rouse, NMCB 14's commanding officer. "The operational tempo, or OPTEMPO, at this year's FEX is dramatically higher. It more closely resembles today's actual combat conditions, thereby providing us with very relevant and valuable training."

NMCB 5 FEX Trains Squad Leaders

*By MC1 (SW) Palmer Pinckney II,
NMCB 5 Public Affairs*

More than 40 petty officers from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 participated in Squad Leader Field Exercise (FEX) training at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., in mid-July. Conducted by the 31st Seabee Readiness Group (SRG), squad leader FEX fulfills two primary objectives: test and sharpen combat skills; and prepare Seabees to operate under continuous hostile conditions.

The extensive six-day training period consisted of sweltering temperatures, tactical fighting gear weighing 100 pounds and little sleep. Before each mission, 31st SRG instructors shifted squad leadership as Seabee teams planned and practiced tactical convoys and security patrols during daylight hours, and executed tactical patrol missions

in the afternoons and evenings. Each squad learned how to navigate by moonlight and terrain features, and to communicate using hand signals. The squads also had the opportunity to practice land navigation, throw live grenades and practice advance weapons handling techniques.

"Working with live grenades was the most exciting part of the training," said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Joel D. Leone, Delta Company adjutant for NMCB 5. "I expected the ordnance to be loud when exploded, but the intensity of the blast caught me by surprise."

"The best part of this training was learning all the tactical skills necessary to operate in hostile situations," said Equipment Operator 1st Class Thomas V. Colesanti, NMCB 5 Air Detachment right guide. "I will surely use this new knowledge to train and lead my troops, keeping them safe and developing them into future Navy leaders."



BU1 Justin R. Hilton, NMCB 5, keeps watch while participating in a reconnaissance patrol during a Field Exercise (FEX) at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., in July. NMCB 5 squad leaders participated in this FEX to help improve leadership and technical knowledge in various contingency operations.

Photo by MC3 Patrick W. Mullen III



Photo by Mychal Watts, courtesy of Coalition to Salute America's Heroes

LEANN RIMES BRIGHTENS INJURED SEABEE'S LIFE

By Samantha L. Quigley, American Forces Press Service

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Peter Reid (left), NMCB 14, receives the keys to a brand-new Chevy Uplander from country music artist LeAnn Rimes (center) as his wife Michele looks on. Reid was selected to receive the vehicle by the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, a non-profit organization providing assistance to wounded and disabled veterans from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Rimes teamed up with Chevrolet at the Country Music Association's Annual Music Festival to present Reid, who was severely wounded while serving in Al Anbar Province in Iraq, with a vehicle specially equipped to accommodate his wheelchair.

NMCB 7 SEABEES PARTICIPATE IN OKINAWAN SPECIAL OLYMPICS

By MC2 Michael B. Lavender, NMCB 7 Public Affairs

Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 volunteered their free time to help make a difference in the lives of children in the 8th Annual Kadena Special Olympics on June 24.

More than 1,300 athletes attended the Games, hosted by Kadena Air Base on Okinawa, Japan. Athletes came from Kadena Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) and surrounding communities on the island.

"Our success this year has come from eight years of learning and growing," said Charles K. Steitz, DoDDS Pacific public affairs officer. "When we first started, we only had around 100 athletes. I'm amazed and humbled that the event has grown to as many special needs athletes participating as it has."

Athletes included people of all ages living with learning disabilities or physical handicaps, com-

peting in a series of events including 50-meter and 300-meter races, Frisbee toss, wheelchair race and an indoor demonstration of floor hockey.

Readying the community for such a large event was no easy feat. With more than 17,000 bottles of water and 10,000 hamburgers and hotdogs, plans began well over a year ago.

"Preparing for something like this is a year-long process," explained Steitz. "Without support from the American and Japanese communities and organizations, this would never work out so well."

"I especially would like to thank all the services for their contributions to helping make this work," he added. "The Navy in particular this year had a large number of volunteers, and we can't thank them enough."

NMCB 7 had more than 25 volunteers come out on their only free day during the week despite heavy periods of rainfall and sweltering heat and humidity.

"I've looked forward to seeing the children compete," said LT Alexis C.

Klassen, NMCB 7's dental officer and volunteer. "I'm proud of all the Seabees who came out to help make a difference in the life of a child."

Every athlete was assigned a Hugger, someone who escorted them throughout the day, providing encouragement, support and assistance. For some Seabees, this was the first time they've participated in the Special Olympics.

"This was a rare opportunity to interact with Okinawan children," said Klassen. "It wasn't some-

thing that I had a chance to do in homeport. I enjoy volunteering, especially when it comes to children and improving their quality of life."

"This is something new to me; I've never done anything like it," added Builder 1st Class (SCW) Eric L. Scott, NMCB 7 Seabee and volunteer. "I knew I wanted to be a part of it after hearing how enjoyable it was from people who participated in the Special Olympics back in our homeport. I'm glad to be a part of it."



LT Alexis C. Klassen (right), NMCB 7 dental officer and Special Olympics volunteer, assists her assigned special needs athlete during the Games.

Photos by MC2 Michael B. Lavender



NAVY No. 88 HITS WALL AT CAMPING WORLD 300

Source – Navy Recruiting Command Public Affairs

Navy Seabees were riding high on Labor Day weekend at Camping World 300 in Fontana, Calif. Unfortunately, the high visibility of the Seabee 65th anniversary logo was short lived after a fiery crash midway through the race sent rookie driver Brad Keselowski to the hospital and the Seabee car to a permanent pit stop for the remainder of the race. Keselowski was examined and released from Loma Linda University Medical Center Saturday night after the crash.

In honor of the 65th anniversary of the Seabees, the No. 88 Navy Chevrolet, owned by Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s JR Motorsports, featured a special Navy Seabee paint scheme for the race at California Speedway. Instead of the regular navy-colored paint scheme, No. 88 had a tan scheme with the Seabee's 65th anniversary logo adorning the hood.

No. 88 Navy Seabee's Chevrolet Monte Carlo SS stands ready to race over Labor Day weekend.

Photo by MC1 Dwayne Richardson

To download the 65th Seabee Anniversary logo, visit <https://portal.navfac.navy.mil/go/publications>.

101 DAYS OF SUMMER SAFETY FOR NMCB 5 SEABEES

By MC1 (SW) Palmer
Pinckney II, NMCB 5
Public Affairs

The period between Memorial Day and Labor Day is when Sailors and Marines are statistically most vulnerable to become injured in mishaps. According to the Navy Safety Center, this summer did not start well. Six Sailors and Marines lost their lives while off duty during the long Memorial Day weekend. To preempt this trend, the Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5, known as 'The Professionals,' conducted their summer safety awareness campaign.

Billed as the '101 Days of Summer Safety Campaign,' the program's goals are to educate, motivate, decrease mishap rates, and improve productivity and mission readiness by heightening

awareness of the potential hazards associated with recreation activities and associated equipment. The campaign also focuses on the Navy's Operational Risk Management (ORM) program, which all Seabees

complete upon arrival at the battalion.

"The campaign is designed to promote safety awareness by reaching out to and educating our troops," said Chief Builder Ernie Davis, NMCB 5 safety officer.

According to Davis, the campaign is registering success with mishaps down 12.5 percent overall when compared to the same time last year.

BUC Ernie Davis (left), NMCB 5 safety officer, points out the goals of the '101 Days of Summer Safety Campaign' to EO Recruit Nichole M. Carter. The program goals are to educate, motivate, decrease mishap rates, and improve productivity and mission readiness.

Photo by
MC1 (SW) Palmer Pinckney II



NMCB 74 VOLUNTEERS MAKE DIFFERENCE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

By LT Edsil Logan and
MCSN John Hulle,
NMCB 74 Public Affairs

Last June was a busy month for Seabee volunteers from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74. Several officers joined in with Mississippi Power and offered a helping hand, clearing approximately 150 yards of shoreline on Deer Island as part of *Operation Renew Our Rivers*. In another volunteer project, NMCB 74's First Class Association helped provide the children and staff of Harper McCaughan Elementary School in Long Beach, Miss., with a nicer and safer place to attend school next year.

Deer Island's beaches and forests – home to many species of animals (such as alligators, turtles and herons) and enjoyed by local residents for recreation – were left covered with small trash and debris from Hurricane Katrina. Since NMCB 74 was deployed to Okinawa when Hurricane Katrina struck and the battalion could not return home to help with immediate recovery, Seabees jumped at the opportunity to help clean up Deer Island.

According to Felinda Hill, corporate environmental specialist for Mississippi Power, more than 19 tons of trash and debris were collected in under eight hours, making *Renew Our Rivers* a great success.

"I was surprised how much debris was



LT Chad Marshall (left) and LT Susanne Wienrich, NMCB 74, help collect trash along the Gulf Coast on June 15. Junior officers from NMCB 74 volunteered their time to help clean up debris still littering the shore from Hurricane Katrina more than two years ago.

U.S. Navy photo

left on the island, even after almost two years," commented LT Susanne Wienrich, Bravo Company commander. "It is always satisfying to give something back to the community, especially assisting with Katrina cleanup."

At Harper McCaughan Elementary School, the

Seabee volunteers dismantled a weathered jungle gym that was a hazard to the children. They also built park benches and improved a modified trailer that the school faculty is using as a temporary class room.

Builder 1st Class (SCW) Patrick Maldonado, NMCB

74 First Class Association president, said he enjoys using his skills as a Seabee to give back to the local community. "We're skilled labor, so anytime the community can get some work done, it's a good thing," he said.

For a complete list of reunions, visit www.allseabees.com or the Seabee Historical Foundation at www.seabeehf.org

SEABEE REUNIONS

2007

OCTOBER

57th NCB (1942-1945)

OCT. 24-26, 2007 • Greenville, SC
2500 Odell School Rd., Concord, NC 28027
Woodrow W. Skipper, 704-723-9629

CBMU 501 (WWII)

OCT. 25-28, 2007 • San Antonio, TX
10834 Palace Way, Dallas, TX 75218
Delia Harris Clayton, 214-321-7479
delia.clayton@gmail.com

NOVEMBER

Seabee Teams 0303/0304/0305/0306

NOV. 4-8, 2007 • Las Vegas, NV
2916 Tophill Ln., Flower Mound, TX 75022
George Fowler, 972-874-7308
gefnbkf@aol.com

2008

FEBRUARY

1st ALL SEABEE REUNION – EAST COAST

FEB. 22-24, 2008 • Hampton, VA
7305 Cannonade Ct., Midlothian, VA 23112-6182
Bruce MacDougall, 804-921-4753
seabeemacd40@comcast.net

By *RADM Richard E. Cellon, CEC, USN*
Commander, 1st Naval Construction Division

U.S. Navy photo



Having just assumed command of the First Naval Construction Division on June 29, I wish to take this opportunity to tell you how proud I am of the work Seabees have been doing and to lay out what I think we need to be focusing on in the months and years ahead. You will often hear me say that there's never been a better time to be a Seabee, and I honestly believe that. We have never been more in demand or more appreciated for our work around the globe.

I just returned from Southwest Asia, where I witnessed firsthand the "Can Do" spirit of our Seabees performing vital work in support of the Global War on Terror. I was continually impressed with the outstanding dedication and work ethic I observed under demanding and often dangerous conditions.

The Naval Construction Force (NCF) has expertly supported Combatant Commanders in their worldwide efforts to dissuade and defeat the enemies of freedom, worked closely with Navy leaders to make our installations more ready to support Fleet missions, and maintained a keen edge of readiness to respond to natural disasters. Seabees' hard work in preparing during homeport and annual training periods, combined with the efforts of the multiple staffs that provide our equipment and financial resources, put the NCF in position to accomplish every mission. A good example is the new "MRAPs" – Mine Resistant Ambush-Protected armored vehicles – that are now in Iraq protecting our Seabees against attack as they travel the roads. Fielding the MRAPs was a major initiative, with many hands contributing to its success.

Recognizing the NCF's vital contribution to the Global War on Terror, Navy leadership has provided more than \$700 million to replace and upgrade Seabee equipment and has authorized the addition of a Naval Mobile Construction Battalion and a Naval Construction Regiment. These two new active duty units, NMCB 11 and the 25th NCR, were commissioned this September.

Looking at the way ahead, I want to focus on four functional areas – Operational Employment, NECC Relationship, Health and Tone of the Force, and Technical Skills.

MY EXPECTATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- ☆ Readiness, at both an individual and unit level, is paramount.
- ☆ We will actively support Navy Expeditionary Combat Command as we man, train and equip the NCF.
- ☆ Leadership must take ownership of their troops, starting at the fire team level. That said, each individual remains accountable for his or her own personal behavior and adherence to Navy Core Values.
- ☆ We must improve upon our individual technical rating, engineering and construction management skills.
- ☆ Finally, we must strike a good life/work balance.

OPERATIONAL EMPLOYMENT: Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are the most immediate concern and drive the need for wartime readiness, but our work extends beyond Southwest Asia. Today, we have other vital missions, so we must be prepared to support Combatant Commanders in operations such as Pacific Partnership, in which we embarked Seabees on USS Peleliu (LHA 5) to participate in a humanitarian assistance mission to Southeast Asia. We shall also remain vigilant in our Homeland Security mission and will be ready to respond to natural disasters and other domestic incident events.

NECC RELATIONSHIP: The alignment of INCD under the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) in January 2006 increased the opportunities for synergy with other Navy expeditionary forces. While the NCF has many mature, robust processes, we can learn much by actively participating in the work of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Enterprise. INCD can leverage its talents and experience to contribute to the overall success of NECC forces.

HEALTH AND TONE OF THE FORCE: The success of the NCF is based upon the individual Seabee and small unit leadership. Our goal is that Seabees are healthy, productive, trust their leaders, and know that their families are supported. We need to exercise operational risk management, on and off duty. Maintaining such an environment will lead to greater work satisfaction and healthy retention.

TECHNICAL SKILLS: Our core competency is our exceptional ability to deliver timely, high-quality construction, "built to code," including necessary planning/estimating and construction management skills. Success in this area requires selecting the right projects to work on, effective technical training and active mentorship by deckplate leadership – in particular, the Chief Petty Officers. It also requires superb support across the board from non-construction personnel who are experts in their fields, such as our logisticians, administrators and medical personnel.

I would like to conclude by saying that Seabees are in great shape today, and the future looks just as bright. I look forward to exciting times ahead as we work to make the NCF an even more effective force to build and fight.

Construimus Batuimus.

BEE-CAM



Five master chiefs from NMCB 3 make history as all reenlist together during a joint ceremony at Camp Shields, Okinawa, on June 1. With 126 years of naval service, 44 deployments and 13 overseas tours between them – and counting – the Seabee 'reenlistees' included (from left to right) CUCM (SCW) David Rich, EQCM (SCW/SW) Robert Graves, CMDCM Ray Dickey, CUCM (SCW) Martin Yingling and UCCM (SCW) Michael Sigler.
Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yepez



NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND

SEABEE MAGAZINE (Code PA)

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